

Coining Images of Power

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VOLUME 15

Coining Images of Power

Patterns in the Representation of Roman Emperors
on Imperial Coinage, A.D. 193–284

By
Erika Manders



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To my parents
To Robert-Jan

CONTENTS

Preface	xi
Abbreviations	xv
Introduction	1

PART ONE

GENERAL PATTERNS ON THIRD-CENTURY IMPERIAL COINAGE

Chapter One	Coins in Context	11
1	Portrait of an era	11
2	Representing imperial power	25
2.1	Concepts and theories	25
2.2	Communicating imperial ideology	29
2.3	Coins and coin types as indicators for the development of third-century imperial representation	33
Chapter Two	Appeasing the Army	63
1	The general picture	66
2	The emperor's military roles	69
3	Victories	77
4	Direct references to the armed forces	87
Chapter Three	Divine Propaganda	95
1	The general picture	99
2	Jupiter	102
3	Hercules	108
4	Mars	115
5	Sun gods	121
5.1	Sol	126
5.2	Apollo	131
6	The emperor as <i>sacerdos</i>	133
7	Divine exceptions on third-century imperial coinage	146
7.1	<i>Elagabalus</i>	146
7.2	<i>Aurelian</i>	150

Chapter Four	Imperial <i>Exempla</i>	155
1	The general picture	158
2	<i>Providentia</i>	162
3	<i>Liberalitas</i>	165
4	<i>Virtus</i>	169
5	<i>Pietas</i>	178
6	<i>Aequitas</i>	182
Chapter Five	The Dawning of a Golden Age	187
1	The general picture	189
2	The core benefits	192
2.1	<i>Felicitas</i>	193
2.2	<i>Pax</i>	199
2.3	<i>Securitas</i>	205
2.4	<i>Salus</i>	211
General Third-century Trends in Numismatic Imperial Representation		221

PART TWO

CASE STUDIES

Chapter Six	Caracalla	225
1	Images of Caracalla	225
2	Comparing imperial imagery on coin types issued in 198–210 and 212–217	229
2.1	Divine association	233
2.2	Military representation	242
2.3	<i>Saeculum aureum</i> and virtues	244
2.4	Other categories	247
3	Conclusions	251
Chapter Seven	Decius	253
1	Images of Decius	253
2	Standard types	255
3	The <i>divi</i> series	263
4	Conclusions	266

Chapter Eight	Gallienus	269
1	Images of Gallienus	269
2	Comparing imperial imagery on coin types issued during joint and sole reign	272
2.1	Military representation	277
2.2	Divine association	283
2.3	<i>Saeculum aureum</i> and virtues	292
2.4	Other categories	297
3	Conclusions	301
Conclusion		303
Appendices		
1	List of emperors and usurpers (A.D. 193–284)	313
2	References to Jupiter, Hercules, Mars, Sol and Apollo on imperial coin types: emperors and corresponding <i>RIC</i> -numbers	316
3	References to other deities on imperial coin types: Emperors and corresponding <i>RIC</i> -numbers	320
4	Diachronic variation in Caracalla's representation during joint and sole reign	324
5	Diachronic variation in Gallienus' representation during Valerianus' and Gallienus' joint reign	329
6	Images	332
Bibliography		343
Index		357

PREFACE

In all past and present societies leaders represent(ed) their power. This book focuses on the ways in which rulers reigning in a period of instability presented themselves to their subjects. With an analysis of the messages that third-century Roman emperors spread through their coins, the vehicle for imperial communications *par excellence*, I aim to shed some light upon the diachronic development of imperial representation in the period A.D. 193–284.

This project was part of the larger research program ‘Image and Reality of Roman Imperial Power, A.D. 193–284’, which also encompassed the projects ‘Local *potentes* in the Roman Empire, A.D. 193–284’ (Daniëlle Slootjes), ‘Status and Power. Administration, Appointment Policies and Social Hierarchies in the Roman Empire, A.D. 193–284’ (Inge Mennen) and a synthesis (Lukas de Blois).¹

Financial support for this project was provided by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), and in addition by the following institutions: the Radboud University of Nijmegen, the Royal Netherlands Institute in Rome, the Stichting Fundatie van de Vrijvrouwe van Renswoude te ‘s-Gravenhage and the Stichting Dr. Hendrik Muller’s Vaderlandsch Fonds. An earlier version of much of chapter one was published in O. Hekster, G. de Kleijn and D. Slootjes eds., *Crises and the Roman Empire. IMEM 7* (Leiden and Boston, 2007) and parts of chapters one, six, seven and eight stood at the basis of two articles that will appear in the *Jaarboek Munt- en Penningkunde* (forthcoming, 2011) and *Lampas* (forthcoming, 2011).²

¹ See D. Slootjes, “Local *potentes* in the Roman Empire: a new approach to the concept of local elites”, *Latomus* 68 (2009), pp. 416–432; D. Slootjes, “Bishops and their position of power in the late third century CE: the cases of Gregory Thaumaturgus and Paul of Samosata”, *Journal of Late Antiquity* 4 (2011), pp. 100–115; D. Slootjes, “Local elites and power in the Roman world: modern theories and models”, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 42 (2011), pp. 235–249; I. Mennen, *Power and Status in the Roman Empire, A.D. 193–284* (Leiden and Boston, 2011).

² E. Manders, “Mapping the representation of Roman imperial power in times of crisis”, in: O. Hekster, G. de Kleijn and D. Slootjes eds., *Crises and the Roman Empire. IMEM 7* (Leiden and Boston, 2007), pp. 275–290; E. Manders, “Communicating messages through coins. A new approach to the emperor Decius”, *Jaarboek Munt- en Penningkunde* 98 (forthcoming, 2011), pp. 1–22; E. Manders, “Boodschappen van de keizer? Monetaire propaganda in de Romeinse keizertijd”, *Lampas* 44.3 (forthcoming, 2011).

Several people contributed to the completion of this book. I am deeply indebted to Olivier Hekster whose trust and enthusiasm, from the moment I started this project onward, were a constant motivation for me. Backed by his expertise I dared to go off the beaten methodological track. Moreover, I value greatly our frequent train journeys together from Nijmegen to Arnhem. Lukas de Blois has taught me everything I know about the third century and saved me from many factual errors. He was always extremely generous with his time and good advice. The support that I received from both of them was more than I could ever have hoped for.

Many others commented thoughtfully on my ideas and parts of my written work. I enjoyed working together with Daniëlle Slootjes and Inge Mennen. Their helpful comments as well as their encouragements along the way were indispensable. Conversations with Martijn Icks were always pleasant and his ideas valuable. I am grateful for his support during the years that we were both working on our PhD thesis. Lien Foubert, Simon Grote, Emily Hemelrijk, Tonio Hölscher, Janneke de Jong, Fleur Kemmers, Stephan Mols, Eric Moormann and Margot van Mulken generously provided me with suggestions during various stages of the process that eventually led to this book. I owe a special word of thanks to Hans Teitler who was always willing to help and read a large part of my book. Years ago, he gave me the confidence to become an ancient historian.

The Royal Netherlands Institute in Rome was always an inspiring place to work. I would especially like to thank Nathalie de Haan, Gert-Jan Burgers and Ivana Bolognese for their help. During my stay in Oxford, Christopher Howgego and Cathy King gave me methodological advice and they provided me with the hoard evidence that I used for comparing coin types with actual coin numbers. Jaś Elsner and Alan Bowman kindly commented on parts of my first and second chapter. I greatly enjoyed the conversations that I had with Ittai Gradel, both in Reading and in Nijmegen. In Berkeley I had the pleasure to work with Carlos Noreña, who showed a great interest in the project.

I owe many thanks to David DeVore who advised me and corrected my English beyond the calls of duty. It goes without saying that all remaining mistakes are entirely my own. Theo Engelen was always available for statistically related questions. Lennart Swart ‘pimped’ my database and magically solved all my computer problems.

The members of the History department at the Radboud University, and especially the staff of Ancient History, made me feel at home in Nijmegen. They provided me with the best circumstances in which a book can be

written. I want to express a special word of thanks to Marloes Hülsken with whom I share not only an office but also a warm friendship.

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I learned so much from my parents who serve in many respects as an example to me. I thank them for their unconditional love and belief in me. Without the help of my father, moreover, this book would not have looked the same; he carefully and patiently edited all the graphs and images.

It is nearly impossible to express all that I owe to Robert-Jan. I could not have done this without his enthusiasm, ideas, comments, humour and never-ceasing support. He is and will always be my source of inspiration.

ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AArchHung</i>	<i>Acta Archaeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae</i>
<i>AFLM</i>	<i>Annali della Facoltà di lettere e filosofia, Università di Macerata</i>
<i>AJPh</i>	<i>American Journal of Philology</i>
<i>ANRW</i>	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i>
<i>ANSMusN</i>	<i>American Numismatic Society Museum Notes</i>
<i>BABesch</i>	<i>Bulletin Antieke Beschaving</i>
<i>Bjb</i>	<i>Bonner Jahrbücher des rheinischen Landesmuseums in Bonn und des Vereins von Altertumsfreunden im Rheinlande</i>
<i>BMCRE</i>	H. Mattingly, C.H.V. Sutherland, E.A. Sydenham et al., <i>Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum</i> (London and Oxford, 1923–)
<i>CAH</i>	<i>The Cambridge Ancient History</i> (Cambridge, 1923–)
<i>CR</i>	<i>The Classical Review</i>
<i>DNP</i>	H. Cancik, H. Schneider und M. Landfester eds., <i>Der Neue Pauly. Enzyklopädie der Antike</i> . 13 Bände Altertum A–Z, 5 Bände Rezeptions- und Wissensgeschichte A–Z, 1 Registerband (Stuttgart and Weimar, 1996–2003)
<i>DOP</i>	<i>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</i>
<i>EPap</i>	<i>Études de Papyrologie</i>
<i>G&R</i>	<i>Greece & Rome</i>
<i>GRBS</i>	<i>Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies</i>
<i>HBN</i>	<i>Hamburger Beiträge zur Numismatik</i>
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
<i>HZ</i>	<i>Historische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>IMEM</i>	<i>Proceedings of the Workshop of the International Network Impact of Empire</i> (Roman Empire c. 200 B.C.–A.D. 476)
<i>ILS</i>	<i>Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae</i>
<i>INC</i>	<i>Proceedings of the International Numismatic Congress</i>
<i>JEastCS</i>	<i>Journal of Eastern Christian Studies</i> (formerly known as <i>Het Christelijk Oosten. Tijdschrift van het Instituut voor Oosters Christendom</i>)
<i>JESHO</i>	<i>Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient</i>
<i>JNG</i>	<i>Jahrbuch für Numismatik und Geldgeschichte</i>
<i>JRA</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Archaeology</i>

<i>JRS</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
<i>LCL</i>	<i>Loeb Classical Library</i>
<i>LIMC</i>	<i>Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae</i> (Zürich, Munich and Dusseldorf, 1981–1997)
<i>LTUR</i>	<i>Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae</i> (Rome, 1993–2000)
<i>MediterrAnt</i>	<i>Mediterraneo antico: economie, società, culture</i>
<i>MÉFRA</i>	<i>Mélanges de l'École française de Rome, Antiquité</i>
<i>NC</i>	<i>Numismatic Chronicle</i>
<i>NCirc</i>	<i>Numismatic Circular</i>
<i>NZ</i>	<i>Numismatische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>PBA</i>	<i>Proceedings of the British Academy</i>
<i>PBSR</i>	<i>Papers of the British School at Rome</i>
<i>RE</i>	A.F. Pauly, G. Wissowa and W. Kroll eds., <i>Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> (Munich, 1894–1980)
<i>RIC</i>	H. Mattingly, E.A. Sydenham et al. eds., <i>Roman Imperial Coinage</i> (London, 1923–)
<i>RIN</i>	<i>Rivista italiana di numismatica e scienze affini</i>
<i>SCI</i>	<i>Scripta Classica Israelica</i>
<i>SchwMbl</i>	<i>Schweizer Münzblätter</i>
<i>SNG</i>	<i>Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum</i>
<i>TG</i>	<i>Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis</i>
<i>TLL</i>	<i>Thesaurus Linguae Latinae</i> (Leipzig etc., 1905–)
<i>TMA</i>	<i>Tijdschrift voor Mediterrane Archeologie</i>
<i>TRAC</i>	<i>Proceedings of the Annual Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference</i>
<i>WS</i>	<i>Wiener Studien</i>
<i>ZPE</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>
<i>ZRG</i>	<i>Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte. Romanistische Abteilung</i>

The translation from the *Panegyrici Latini* is from C.E.V. Nixon and B.S. Rodgers, *In Praise of Later Emperors. The Panegyrici Latini* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and Oxford, 1994) and the translation from the *Codex Theodosianus* from C. Pharr, *The Theodosian Code and novels and the Sirmondian constitutions: a translation with commentary, glossary, and bibliography* (New York, 1969). In addition, the translation from the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* is adapted from P.E. Brunt and J.M. Moore, *Res Gestae Divi Augusti. The Achievements of the Divine Augustus* (Oxford, 1967), while translations from

the Thirteenth Sibylline Oracle are either from D.S. Potter, *The Roman Empire at Bay A.D. 180–395* (London, 2004) or from D.S. Potter, *Prophecy and History in the Crisis of the Roman Empire: A Historical Commentary on the Thirteenth Sibylline Oracle* (Oxford, 1990). All other translations are adapted from the *LCL*.

INTRODUCTION

Thirty-five Augusti held sway over the Roman Empire during the troublesome years between 193 and 284. All broadcast messages through their coins. These messages on the obverses and reverses of imperial coins reveal how the thirty-five rulers presented themselves and their emperorship to the heterogeneous population of the vast Empire. They do not, however, present only individual images of the thirty-five Augusti. Examined as a whole, these third-century coins also demonstrate how imperial representation developed diachronically in that period.

While current scholarship has addressed both individual third-century rulers' self-representation through their coins and particular diachronic aspects of third-century imperial representation on imperial coinage, the diachronic development of the representation of Roman imperial power on imperial coins issued in the third century as a whole remains undiscussed. It is this lacuna that the present study aims to fill. It aims to describe and interpret the diachronic development of imperial representation on imperial coins issued from 193 to 284 by means of investigating whether patterns can be distinguished in how third-century emperors presented themselves on their coins.¹

A starting point for this analysis is formed by the appointment of the emperor Pertinax (193), who succeeded the murdered Antonine emperor Commodus. The accession of Diocletian (284) marks the end of the analysis. Two factors decided this chronological demarcation. First, the situation within the Roman Empire. The violent death of Commodus inaugurated a period of instability. From this moment onward, imperial succession often proved problematic, internal and external threats ended the peacetime that Commodus had effectuated, and the state's treasury became exhausted. When we add epidemics and banditry to this, the recipe for crisis was complete. The hardships reached a climax in the second half of the third century, and it was not before 284, with the accession of Diocletian, that problems were tackled successfully. Diocletian owed his success to the acknowledgement that he was not able to govern the Roman Empire alone; in the previous years, sole rule had proven ineffective since

¹ Here, patterns are defined as characteristic orders in which specific representational types occur on third-century coinage.

it had bred many usurpations. The Tetrarchy brought about many changes; together with his co-regents Diocletian brought military, administrative, and financial reforms into force and won key military victories. The time span between the murder of Commodus and the accession of Diocletian, and particularly the second half of this period, can thus be called a period of severe problems. Second, both Commodus and the Tetrarchs represented themselves in distinct ways. Whereas Commodus established a 'personalized' god-emperorship, the Tetrarchy consistently represented itself through various media as a divinely supported imperial college within which emperorship was wholly institutionalized.² The period from the accession of Pertinax until the accession of Diocletian finds itself between these two exceptional forms of representation.

In order to map imperial representation in the period between Commodus and the Tetrarchs, I have examined the reverses of 8227 imperial coin types, all issued in the period 193–284. On the basis of the imagery and especially the legends on the reverses, I divided these coin types into thirteen representational categories and, through quantitative analysis, determined the most common representational forms. The latter are listed in the following table:³

Table 1 The four most common representational forms on coins issued from 193 to 284

Military representation	All forms of representation emphasizing the armed forces, military victories, and the role of the emperor as general.
Divine association	All forms of representation connecting the emperor and his reign with the gods/the divine and displaying the emperor as <i>sacerdos</i> .
Virtues	All forms of representation promoting the virtues of the emperor, the army, or the people (of Rome or of other regions)
<i>Saeculum aureum</i>	All forms of representation featuring the prosperity that the emperor will bring/has brought

² On Commodus see O. Hekster, *Commodus. An Emperor at the Crossroads* (Amsterdam, 2002) and on the Tetrarchy see R. Rees, "Images and image: a re-examination of Tetrarchic iconography", *G&R* 40 (1993), pp. 181–200.

³ An overview of all thirteen representational categories and the criteria used for dividing the types into these categories is presented in chapter one (see table 2).

The separate diachronic developments of the categories ‘military representation’, ‘divine association’, ‘virtues’ and ‘*saeculum aureum*’ on third-century imperial coin types are described in part one of this book, which presents an analysis of third-century imperial representation at the macro level.

In chapter one, the representation of imperial power on third-century coinage is put in a broader context. This means that the circumstances in which the emperors ruled the Empire between 193 and 284 are discussed. In addition, the correlation between important concepts, such as ‘power’, ‘representation’, and ‘ideology’, is explained. Furthermore, attention is paid to the communication of imperial ideology in general as well as to the dissemination of imperial messages through coins in particular. Finally, the methodology used in order to reach the abovementioned aim is presented and important first results are recorded.

Chapters two, three, four and five begin by describing the diachronic development of each representational category as a whole and proceed to discuss the sub-forms of each representational style. In chapter two, dealing with military representation, this entails that attention is paid first to the emperor’s role as *imperator*, second to types reflecting victory and third to types referring to the armed forces. Successively analyzed in the third chapter are the representation of five deities promoted by most third-century emperors on their coins – Jupiter, Hercules, Mars, Sol and Apollo – and images of the emperor as a priest.⁴ Chapter four, discussing the representation of virtues, foregrounds the propagation of the five core virtues distinguished for the period 193–284: *providentia*, *liberalitas*, *virtus*, *pietas* and *aequitas*. Chapter five, which focuses on the promotion of a *saeculum aureum*, analyzes the four most represented imperial benefits, *felicitas*, *pax*, *securitas* and *salus*. At the end of part one the general representational patterns on third-century imperial coinage, as presented in chapter one up to five, are briefly summarized before proceeding to the next part of the book. Part two, encompassing particular case studies, focuses on whether comparable patterns are also visible at the micro level.

In part two, the self-representational policies of three emperors for their coin types are investigated. The focus lies on two emperors who reigned for a longer period of time, Caracalla (198–217) and Gallienus

⁴ Also described in chapter three are the exceptional associations of Elagabalus and Aurelian with specific deities, Elagabal and Sol.

(253–268), and on the short-lived emperor Decius (249–251). These three emperors had all issued a representative number of coin types and are relatively well dispersed chronologically over the period 193–284. Alternatively, it would have been possible to look at micro level at one of the more unique third-century rulers, such as Elagabalus and, in another way, Aurelian. Still, in order to distinguish patterns, the chosen three emperors seem more representative. Furthermore, regarding Decius, modern scholars have primarily focused on the biased literary sources. Consequently, attention has mainly been paid to one single aspect of his reign in modern literature: the issuance of the sacrificial edict and its consequences.⁵ An analysis of Decius' coin types might balance this one-sided image of this emperor's reign. As for Caracalla and Gallienus, the ways in which they represented their power have generally been underexposed in recently published literature.⁶ Whereas for Caracalla the focus lies on his possible identification with Alexander the Great and the *Constitutio Antoniniana*, only Gallienus' 'animal coins' are discussed in a recent contribution.⁷ For all three emperors, therefore, a study of their coin types fills a lacuna in modern scholarship.

Caracalla's self-representation is discussed in chapter six. This chapter compares the image coming forward from coinage between Caracalla's joint reign with Severus and his sole reign. Chapter eight, which discusses Gallienus' representation, does the same; Gallienus' types issued during his joint reign with Valerian are compared with the types minted during his sole reign. Chapter seven then elaborates upon the way in which Decius presented himself to his subjects. First, the image that stems from an analysis of his standard coin types is described. Second, an attempt is made to interpret Decius' exceptional *divi* series. These chapters, however,

⁵ See for example B. Bleckmann, "Zu den Motiven der Christenverfolgung des Decius", in: K.-P. Johne, T. Gerhardt and U. Hartmann eds., *Deleto paene imperio Romano. Transformationsprozesse des Römischen Reiches im 3. Jahrhundert und ihre Rezeption in der Neuzeit* (Stuttgart, 2006), pp. 57–71 and J.B. Rives, "The decree of Decius and the religion of empire", *JRS* 89 (1999), pp. 135–154.

⁶ On the representation of Caracalla see recently an unpublished dissertation (C. Rowan, *Under Divine Auspices. Patron Deities and the Visualisation of Imperial Power in the Severan Period* (Diss. Sydney, 2009)) and A. Lichtenberger, *Severus Pius Augustus. Zur sakralen Repräsentation 193–211 n. Chr.* (Leiden and Boston, 2011).

⁷ On Caracalla see for example D. Baharal, "Caracalla and Alexander the Great: a reappraisal", in: C. Deroux, *Studies in Latin literature and Roman history* 7 (Brussels, 1994), pp. 524–567 and E. Simon, "Die Constitutio Antoniniana und ein syrisches Porträt", in: U. Huttner ed., *Rom und der griechische Osten. Festschrift H.H. Schmitt* (Stuttgart, 1995), pp. 249–250. On Gallienus see D. Weigel, "Gallienus' 'animal series' coins and Roman religion", *NC* 150 (1990), pp. 135–143.

do not fully analyze the whole of the emperors' biographical contexts, but mainly try to understand the direct circumstances in which coin types were chosen.

As in part one of this book, the division of coin types into the thirteen representational categories underpins the analyses presented in the chapters comprising part two. Equally methodologically relevant is how the analyses at the macro level and the analyses at the micro level share a fusion of quantitative with qualitative research.

The conclusion at the end of the book offers a synthesis of part one and two, in that it brings together both the general third-century patterns and the individual case studies.

Recent scholarship has paid continual attention to imperial representation. Paul Zanker and Tonio Hölscher can be considered pioneers in this respect; Zanker's *Augustus und die Macht der Bilder* (Munich, 1987) and Hölscher's *Römische Bildsprache als semantisches System* (Heidelberg, 1987) demonstrate the importance of 'visual imagery' (e.g. architectural monuments, sculpture, coins) in communicating ideology. Jaś Elsner has built on the work of Zanker and Hölscher and attributed an important place to the viewer in the process of communication.⁸

More recently, Clifford Ando argued in his *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire* (Berkeley, 2000) that the representation of imperial power, and thus the dissemination of imperial ideology, was crucial for holding the Empire together. He examines imperial representation from different angles and by means of various media that were employed for the distribution of imperial images. In addition, Gregor Weber and Martin Zimmermann have edited *Propaganda – Selbstdarstellung – Repräsentation im römischen Kaiserreich des 1. Jhs. n. Chr.* (Stuttgart, 2003). This volume deals not only with the different methods by which political ideas could be spread in the early Roman Empire, but also presents a conceptual and theoretical framework for the study of imperial representation.⁹

⁸ J. Elsner, *Art and the Roman Viewer. The Transformation of Art from the Pagan World to Christianity* (Cambridge, 1995) and J. Elsner, *Imperial Rome and Christian Triumph. The Art of the Roman Empire AD 100–450* (Oxford, 1998).

⁹ Imperial representation is nowadays examined from all possible disciplines and points of view, see for example L. de Blois et al. eds., *The Representation and Perception of Roman Imperial Power. IMEM 3* (Amsterdam, 2003).

In applying modern theories of communication to the study of Roman imperial representation, Olivier Hekster's *Commodus. An Emperor at the Crossroads* (Amsterdam, 2002) presents a new approach. In his study on Commodus he incorporates not only modern views on visual programs and audiences that can help in examining and interpreting ancient visual programs, but he also offers a paradigm for reconstructing individual emperors' visual programs through analysis of messages disseminated by various types of media.

As for research on third-century imperial representation, much work has been done. These studies focus either on the representation of individual third-century emperors or consider (the developments of) particular aspects of imperial representation in the third century. De Blois' study on the representation of Gallienus, which is still of great value, is representative of analyses of individual third-century emperors' representation.¹⁰ For attention paid to specific aspects of imperial representation in the third century, Marianne Bergmann's work on the radiate crown as imperial attribute and Carlos Noreña's article on the propagation of imperial virtues on coins provide good examples.¹¹ However, no scholarly work has yet appeared that discusses the diachronic development of third-century imperial representation in one specific medium as a whole.¹²

Central to this book is the communication of imperial ideology through coinage. Much has been published on the role of coins in spreading (imperial) messages. Initially, Arnold Jones and, later followed by, Michael Crawford questioned the importance of coins as a message medium.¹³ In response to Jones' and Crawford's views, however, Barbara Levick and Andrew Wallace-Hadrill have more recently provided strong

¹⁰ Other recent examples of such studies are Lichtenberger, *Severus Pius Augustus* and M. Icks, *The Crimes of Elagabalus: The Life and Legacy of Rome's Decadent Boy Emperor* (London and New York, 2011).

¹¹ M. Bergmann, *Die Strahlen der Herrscher. Theomorphes Herrscherbild und politische Symbolik im Hellenismus und in der römischen Kaiserzeit* (Mainz, 1998); C.F. Noreña, "The communication of the emperor's virtues", *JRS* 91 (2001), pp. 146–168. Other recent examples of such studies: R. Stepper, *Augustus et sacerdos. Untersuchungen zum römischen Kaiser als Priester* (Stuttgart, 2003); S. Berrens, *Sonnenkult und Kaisertum von den Severern bis zu Constantin I. (193–337 n.Chr.)* (Stuttgart, 2004).

¹² See, however, J. de Jong, *Emperors in Egypt. The Representation and Perception of Roman Imperial Power in Greek Papyrus Texts from Egypt, AD 193–284* (Diss. Nijmegen, 2006).

¹³ A.H.M. Jones, "Numismatics and history", in: R.A.G. Carson and C.H.V. Sutherland eds., *Essays in Roman Coinage presented to Harold Mattingly* (Oxford, 1956), pp. 13–33; M. Crawford, "Roman imperial coin types and the formation of public opinion", in: C. Brooke

arguments in favor of considering coinage as a vehicle for imperial communications.¹⁴ Nowadays, it is widely (though by no means universally) recognized that coins were deliberately used for communicating (imperial) messages.¹⁵ Lummel, Hekster and Kemmers have even demonstrated that messages on coins could target specific audiences.¹⁶

As to methods for the examination of coins, relatively few scholars have employed a quantitative analysis of coin types in order to investigate imperial representation. In this, Carlos Noreña leads the way. His *JRS* article 'The communication of the emperor's virtues' (2001) discusses the varying degrees to which imperial virtues were emphasized in the period 69–235 through quantification of imperial coin types. Unfortunately, apart from Noreña's work, little further research employs similar methods to describe imperial representation. Following Noreña, I hope to demonstrate the value of a quantitative approach by showing how many new insights it could generate.

et al. eds., *Studies in Numismatic Method presented to Philipp Grierson* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 47–64.

¹⁴ B. Levick, "Propaganda and the imperial coinage", *Antichthon* 16 (1982), pp. 104–116; A. Wallace-Hadrill, "Image and authority in the coinage of Augustus", *JRS* 76 (1986), pp. 66–87.

¹⁵ See for instance C. Howgego, *Ancient History from Coins* (London and New York, 1995); G.M. Paul and M. Ierardi eds., *Roman Coins and Public Life under the Empire* (Michigan, 1999); Noreña, "The communication of the emperor's virtues".

¹⁶ P. Lummel, 'Zielgruppen' römischer Staatskunst. *Die Münzen der Kaiser Augustus bis Trajan und die trajanischen Staatsreliefs* (Munich, 1991); O. Hekster "Coins and messages. Audience targeting on coins of different denominations?", in: L. de Blois et al., *The Representation and Perception of Roman Imperial Power*, pp. 20–35; F. Kemmers, "Not at random: evidence for a regionalised coin supply?", in: J. Bruhn, B. Croxford and D. Grigoropoulos eds., *TRAC 2004: Proceedings of the Fourteenth Annual Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference, Durham 2004* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 39–49; F. Kemmers, *Coins for a Legion. An analysis of the coin finds of the Augustan legionary fortress and Flavian canabae legionis at Nijmegen* (Mainz, 2006).

PART ONE

GENERAL PATTERNS ON THIRD-CENTURY IMPERIAL COINAGE

CHAPTER ONE

COINS IN CONTEXT

1. PORTRAIT OF AN ERA

In modern scholarship, the third century (A.D. 193–284) has been considered a period in which the Roman Empire shook to its foundations. In the second half of the twentieth century, many scholars focused on which label should be attached to this period characterized by internal and external turmoil. Andreas Alföldi, for instance, regarded the third century as an epoch of ‘Weltkrise’, whereas Géza Alföldy wrote about a total crisis of the system.¹ In more recent literature, the concept ‘crisis’ has also been used to describe the situation in this turbulent period of Roman history.²

Whether, however, the third century can indeed be understood as a period of crisis is subjected to a fierce debate. Important contributions to this debate are offered by Karl Strobel and Christian Witschel who both questioned the application of the term crisis to the third century.³ In his *Das Imperium Romanum im 3. Jahrhundert*, Strobel argued that contemporary literary sources do not reflect a notion of crisis: ‘das Bild der Strukturkrise des Reiches und der krisenhaften Wandlungsprozesse entsteht letztlich erst in der modernen, retrospektiven Analyse’.⁴ Witschel, in addition, demonstrated by means of an analysis of third-century developments in the core structures of the Roman world (cities, the rural economy and the defence of the frontier) and of these elements in the western provinces that a uniform crisis, which affected all areas to the same extent

¹ A. Alföldi, *Studien zur Geschichte der Weltkrise des 3. Jhs. n. Chr.* (Darmstadt, 1967); G. Alföldy, *Römische Sozialgeschichte* (Wiesbaden, 1984), pp. 133–137.

² See for instance A.K. Bowman, P. Garnsey, A. Cameron eds., *CAH 12: The Crisis of Empire A.D. 193–337* (Cambridge, 2005); J. Haas, *Die Umweltkrise des 3. Jahrhunderts n. Chr. im Nordwesten des Imperium Romanum. Interdisziplinäre Studien zu einem Aspekt der allgemeinen Reichskrise im Bereich der beiden Germaniae sowie der Belgica und der Raetia* (Stuttgart, 2006); W. Liebeschuetz, “Was there a crisis of the third century?”, in: O. Hekster, G. de Kleijn and D. Slootjes eds., *Crises and the Roman Empire. IMEM 7* (Leiden and Boston, 2007), pp. 11–20.

³ See also W. Eck, “Krise oder Nichtkrise – Das ist hier die Frage. Köln und sein Territorium in der 2. Hälfte des 3. Jahrhunderts”, in: Hekster, De Kleijn and Slootjes, *Crises and the Roman Empire*, pp. 23–43.

⁴ K. Strobel, *Das Imperium Romanum im 3. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart, 1993), p. 300.

at the same time and with the same consequences, did not exist in the third century.⁵

These insights led some scholars to abandon the concept 'crisis' and define the third century as a period of transformation.⁶ Other authors preferred to use the term crisis only for (a) specific period(s) within the third century in which problems in the Empire reached a climax, instead of using it for the third century as a whole. Witschel, for instance, did apply the concept 'crisis' to the years between ca. 250/60 and 280/90, since many areas seem to have experienced widespread difficulties in this period. Yet, in doing so Witschel pleaded that attention must still be paid to regional differences.⁷ Michel Christol is another advocate for applying the concept crisis to a specific period within the third century; he defined the years 249–274 as a period of 'crises et bouleversements'. Within this large period of upheaval he distinguished three separate periods of crisis, namely the years 249–253, 259/60 and 267–70, in which the stability of imperial power was deeply affected.⁸

Yet, whether the third century should be understood either as a period of crisis/crises or as a period of transformation, the fact remains that the emperors reigning in the years 193–284, whose representation is central to this book, were confronted with a unique combination of various sorts of problems. In this section, I would like to shift the attention from the problem of defining terminology for the circumstances that occurred in the third century to the circumstances themselves. After all, under these circumstances the emperors had chosen their coin types; particular

⁵ C. Witschel, *Krise-Rezession-Stagnation? Der Westen des römischen Reiches im 3. Jahrhundert n. Chr.* (Frankfurt am Main, 1999), p. 376. See also C. Witschel, "Re-evaluating the Roman West in the 3rd c. A.D.," *JRA* 17 (2004), pp. 251–281. See also P. Brown, *The Making of Late Antiquity* (Cambridge MA and London, 1978), pp. 4–5.

⁶ For instance K.-P. Johné, T. Gerhardt, U. Hartmann eds., *Deleto paene imperio Romano. Transformation-prozesse des Römische Reiches im 3. Jahrhundert und ihre Rezeption in der Neuzeit* (Stuttgart, 2006).

⁷ Witschel, *Krise*, pp. 375–76.

⁸ M. Christol, *L'Empire romain du III^e siècle. Histoire politique 192–325 après J.-C.* (Paris, 1997), pp. 119–165. Cf. L. de Blois, "The crisis of the third century A.D. in the Roman Empire: a modern myth?", in: L. de Blois and J. Rich eds., *The Transformation of Economic Life under the Roman Empire. IMEM 2* (Amsterdam, 2002), pp. 204–217; G. Alföldy, *Die Krise des römischen Reiches. Geschichte, Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichtsbetrachtung. Ausgewählte Beiträge* (Stuttgart, 1989), pp. 328–333. See also F. Kolb, "Wirtschaftliche und soziale Konflikte im Römischen Reich des 3. Jahrhunderts n. Chr.," in: A. Lippold and N. Himmelfmann eds., *Bonner Festgabe Johannes Straub zum 65. Geburtstag am 18. Oktober 1977* (Bonn, 1977), pp. 277–95; p. 277 with n. 2.

events could have influenced the rulers' visual programs, in a direct or indirect way.

Although, as Witschel has demonstrated, not all inhabitants of the Roman Empire experienced troubles to the same extent in the period 193–284, nearly all thirty-five Augusti had to cope with difficulties in various parts of the Empire. We can distinguish the problems that define the period 193–284 and which thrust the emperors in difficult positions into three categories.⁹ First, external threats pressured the emperors and their armed forces at the frontiers. Difficulties were the most pressing at the eastern and northern borders. Coming from beyond the northeastern borders, the Quadi, Vandals, Sarmatai, and Goths invaded Roman territory.¹⁰ By 250, the Goths formed the most potent threat at the northeastern frontier and from 255 onward Asia Minor was even endangered by Goths coming from overseas.¹¹ Further eastward, the Parthians and later on, after the Sassanid dynasty gained control over the Parthian Empire in 226, the Persians constituted a permanent threat.¹² From the reign of Severus Alexander onward, wars between the Persians and the Romans

⁹ For a chronologic overview of the events that took place in the years 193–284, see Bowman, Garnsey and Cameron, *CAH* 12², pp. 1–58. For the years 235–284/5, see also X. Lorient and D. Nony, *La crise de l'Empire romain, 235–285* (Paris, 1997); K.-P. Johné, U. Hartmann and T. Gerhardt eds., *Die Zeit der Soldatenkaiser. Krise und Transformation des Römischen Reiches im 3. Jahrhundert n. Chr. (235–284)* (Berlin, 2008), pp. 161–423.

¹⁰ On the situation beyond the northern frontiers in the third century, see for instance I. Piso, *An der Nordgrenze des Römischen Reiches: ausgewählte Studien (1972–2003)* (Stuttgart, 2005); A. Goltz, "Die Völker an der nordwestlichen Reichsgrenze", in: Johné, Hartmann and Gerhardt, *Die Zeit der Soldatenkaiser*, pp. 442–447; A. Goltz, "Die Völker an der mittleren und nordöstlichen Reichsgrenze", in: Johné, Hartmann and Gerhardt, *Die Zeit der Soldatenkaiser*, pp. 449–464. On Germanic tribes, see M. Todd, *The Early Germans* (Oxford and Malden, 1992) and M. Todd, "The Germanic peoples and Germanic society", in: Bowman, Garnsey and Cameron, *CAH* 12², pp. 440–460.

¹¹ Todd, *The Early Germans*, p. 56; Mennen, *Power and Status in the Roman Empire*, p. 29. On Goths, see H. Wolfram, *Die Goten und ihre Geschichte* (Munich, 2001) and on the threats they posed to the Roman Empire, see Lorient and Nony, *La Crise de l'Empire romain*, pp. 38–43.

¹² On the Parthian Empire, see J. Wiesehöfer ed., *Das Partherreich und seine Zeugnisse = The Arsacid Empire, sources and documentation : Beiträge des internationalen Colloquiums, Eutin (27.–30. Juni 1996)* (Stuttgart, 1998). On the relation between Rome and the Parthians, B. Campbell, "War and diplomacy: Rome and Parthia, 31 B.C.–A.D. 235", in: J. Rich, G. Shipley eds., *War and Society in the Roman World* (London and New York, 1993), pp. 213–240. On the Parthians and Persians, M. Brosius, *The Persians* (London and New York, 2006). On the relations between the Persians and Rome, see E. Kettenhofen, *Die römisch-persischen Kriege des 3. Jahrhunderts n. Chr. nach der Inschrift Šāhpūhrs* (Wiesbaden, 1982); R.N. Frye, "The Sassanians", in: Bowman, Garnsey and Cameron, *CAH* 12², pp. 461–480. On the situation beyond the eastern frontiers in the third century, see Johné, Hartmann and Gerhardt, *Die Zeit der Soldatenkaiser*, pp. 474–580.

were fought almost continuously since the Persians pursued an aggressive expansion policy. Major clashes between the Romans and the Persians took place between 240 and 272, under the reign of the Persian king Shapur I. The latter even captured the Roman emperor Valerian in 260; a greater humiliation for the Romans was inconceivable.¹³ Besides troubles at the eastern frontiers, problems loomed in the Danube and Rhine area, where the Romans had conflicts with tribes such as the Franks and Alamanni.¹⁴ Already under Marcus Aurelius battles were fought against these peoples who invaded the Danube and Rhine regions in order to provide for their basic needs.¹⁵ In the 230's problems flared up again since raids and invasions of these Germanic peoples increased and intensified, and the Roman armies attempted almost continuously to control these tribes until Diocletian's accession in 284.¹⁶

Second, internal turmoil was rampant from 193 to 284. The most telling examples of these internal problems were the creation of a Gallic counter-empire within the borders of the Roman Empire during Gallienus' rule and, at the same time, a similar claim from Rome's 'vassal state' Palmyra. The Gallic Empire came into being when Postumus, Gallienus' military commander at the Rhine frontier, rebelled against Gallienus in 260. This rebellion was presumably the result of a quarrel about booty; Postumus had divided the booty of a battle amongst his soldiers, whereas Saloninus and Silvanus, Gallienus' son and his guardian, claimed it for themselves.¹⁷ Consequently, Postumus was proclaimed emperor by his soldiers, his troops led siege to Cologne, the place where Saloninus and Silvanus were stationed, and both Gallienus' son and his guardian were put to death.¹⁸ In this way, a counter-empire was created which, at its height, encompassed Gallia, Germania, Britannia and Hispania. Postumus could only have these

¹³ Festus, *Breviarum* 23; *Oracula Sibyllina* 155–71; *Res Gestae Divi Saporis* 9–11. See also A. Goltz and U. Hartmann, "Valerianus und Gallienus", in: John, Hartmann and Gerhardt, *Die Zeit der Soldatenkaiser*, pp. 223–295; pp. 248–255.

¹⁴ On the Franks, see E. James, *The Franks* (Oxford, 1988). On the Alamanni in the third century, see J.F. Drinkwater, *The Alamanni and Rome, 213–496 (Caracalla to Clovis)* (Oxford, 2007).

¹⁵ A.R. Birley, *Marcus Aurelius: a biography*, 2nd edition (London, 1987), pp. 140–210 and 249–255.

¹⁶ See below, p. 83 with n. 93.

¹⁷ J.F. Drinkwater, *The Gallic Empire. Separatism and Continuity in the North-Western Provinces of the Roman Empire A.D. 260–274* (Stuttgart, 1974), p. 24; I. König, *Die gallischen Usurpatoren von Postumus bis Tetricus* (München, 1981), pp. 46–47.

¹⁸ See O. Hekster, *Rome and its Empire, A.D. 193–284* (Edinburgh, 2008), p. 26; Drinkwater, *The Gallic Empire*, p. 24.

successes through having a strong local power base.¹⁹ For their protection, apparently, the people in Gaul had more trust in a local military commander than in a distant Roman emperor. It was Postumus, after all, who defeated the German tribes threatening their area.²⁰ After Postumus, the Gallic Empire was ruled by three successive emperors, Marius, Victorinus and Tetricus, who even experienced usurpations. Only after fourteen years and several unsuccessful attempts by Gallienus and Claudius Gothicus to annihilate the counter-empire, Aurelian defeated the last Gallic emperor Tetricus in 274.²¹

As for Palmyra, the Syrian city initially was of great help to the Roman emperors Valerian and Gallienus. Its ruler Odaenathus, who acknowledged Roman supremacy, fought off the Persians, defeated the usurper Quietus and put the Goths, who were raiding Asia Minor, to a halt.²² After Odaenathus' murder in 267, however, the relationship between Rome and Palmyra changed. The Palmyrenes were now reigned by Odaenathus' wife Zenobia, who acted as a regent for their son Vaballathus.²³ Although she seemed to have accepted Roman sovereignty in first instance, she gradually enlarged Palmyrene territory; in 271 the Palmyrene Empire extended from Egypt to Asia Minor.²⁴ Furthermore, without Roman consent, Vaballathus was called *imperator, corrector totius Orientis, dux Romanorum* and *consul*.²⁵ On coins minted by the imperial mint in Antioch some of these titles are mentioned. They display Aurelian's portrait on the obverse and Vaballathus' portrait, together with the legend VABALATHVS V(ir) C(larissimus) R(ex) IM(perator) D(ux) R(omanorum), on the reverse.²⁶ By

¹⁹ See also Lorient and Nony, *La crise de l'Empire romain*, pp. 65–80.

²⁰ Hekster, *Rome and its Empire*, p. 26.

²¹ With this victory, the coinage of the Gallic Empire also came to an end. A comparison between the coinage of the Roman Empire and that of the Gallic Empire demonstrates that messages on coins could react to each other, see below, pp. 113–114. On the coins of the Gallic Empire, see Drinkwater, *The Gallic Empire*, pp. 148–214.

²² J. Drinkwater, "Maximinus to Diocletian and the 'crisis'", in: Bowman, Garnsey and Cameron, *CAH* 12, pp. 28–66; p. 46; M. Sommer, "Der Löwe von Tadmor. Palmyra und der unwahrscheinliche Aufstieg des Septimius Odaenathus", *HZ* 287 (2008), pp. 281–318; p. 313.

²³ R. Stoneman, *Palmyra and its Empire. Zenobia's Revolt against Rome* (Ann Arbor, 1992), p. 117; Drinkwater, "Maximinus to Diocletian", p. 47; Hekster, *Rome and its Empire*, p. 24; U. Hartmann, *Das Palmyrenische Teilreich* (Stuttgart, 2001), p. 242. P. Southern, *Empress Zenobia. Palmyra's Rebel Queen* (London and New York, 2008), pp. 83ff.

²⁴ Hartmann, *Das Palmyrenische Teilreich*, p. 297.

²⁵ Drinkwater, "Maximinus to Diocletian", pp. 51–2.

²⁶ The provincial mint of Alexandria also issued coins displaying the heads of both men, Aurelian and Vaballathus. See Hartmann, *Das Palmyrenische Teilreich*, p. 253.

using these titles, the unique position that the Roman authorities had attributed to Odaenathus for his services was illegitimately claimed for Vaballathus and even further expanded.²⁷ At this point, the emperor Aurelian could no longer ignore the threat posed to his power by the city that was once a helpful ally. In 272, Aurelian took up his weapons against the Palmyrenes and defeated them.²⁸ After the victory over the Gallic emperor and the capitulation of the Palmyrenes, the Empire was united again and Aurelian was celebrated as *restitutor orbis*.²⁹

The aforementioned separatist movements demonstrate that the unity within the Roman Empire was precarious. Along with threats to unity, there emerged other internal troubles. Grave financial problems seem to have plagued nearly all third-century emperors. They were mainly caused by Septimius Severus' and Caracalla's raise of the soldiers' pay, which had repercussions on the economic situation of the whole third century.³⁰ In addition, the many wars fought in the period 193–284 contributed to the exhaustion of state finances. To meet the financial deficits, the precious metal content of imperial coinage was debased continually throughout the third century. From Caracalla onward, 'a massive and deliberate manipulation of the coinage came into play'.³¹ Caracalla lowered the weight standard of the gold coin, tampered with the silver coinage and introduced a new silver coin.³² This *antoninianus*, characterized by a radiate obverse portrait, had the same silver content as the *denarius*, but was the double of its value.³³ Caracalla's monetary policy was followed by subsequent emperors and especially after 253 the debasement rapidly accelerated. It

²⁷ On Odaenathus' position, see D. Potter, "Palmyra and Rome: Odaenathus' titulature and the use of the *imperium maius*", *ZPE* 113 (1996), pp. 271–285.

²⁸ R. Stoneman, *Palmyra and its Empire*, pp. 163–179; Hartmann, *Das Palmyrenische Teilreich*, pp. 364–394.

²⁹ *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, nos. 53, 139, 287–306, 386, 389, 399.

³⁰ K.W. Harl, *Coinage in the Roman Economy, 300 B.C. to A.D. 700* (Baltimore and London, 1996), pp. 126 and 128. See also M.A. Speidel, "Roman army pay scales", *JRS* 82 (1992), pp. 87–106; R. Alston, "Roman military pay from Caesar to Diocletian", *JRS* 84 (1994), pp. 113–123.

³¹ A. Watson, *Aurelian and the Third Century*, 2nd edition (London and New York, 1999), p. 126.

³² Watson, *Aurelian*, p. 126.

³³ Harl, *Coinage in the Roman Economy*, p. 128; M. Corbier, "Coinage and taxation: the state's point of view, A.D. 193–337", in: Bowman, Garnsey and Cameron, *CAH* 12², pp. 327–392; p. 333; J.-P. Callu, *La politique monétaire des empereurs Romains de 238 à 311* (Paris, 1969), p. 197. Whereas Elagabalus stopped the minting of *antoniniani* in 219, Pupienus and Balbinus began issuing them again in 238 (Corbier, "Coinage and taxation", p. 334).

reached its lowest point between 260 and 274; whereas the silver content of the *antoninianus* was 47.7% in 238, it was reduced to 2.7% and even below that under Claudius Gothicus' rule.³⁴

It was the emperor Aurelian who, for the first time in the third century, seriously attempted to curb the debasement and the consecutive inflation through a major monetary reform.³⁵ He tried to restore the imperial coinage during his reign by improving the precious metal content of the coins.³⁶ He introduced the radiate *aurelianus* which, in contrast with the *antoninianus*, had a higher silver content and was of improved weight and manufacture.³⁷ Furthermore, he raised the number of imperial mints and reorganized them. Aurelian's reforms of the currency, however, only had a short-term effect and more monetary changes were carried through after his reign. At the end of the third and the beginning of the fourth century, Diocletian took strong measures in order to reform the currency system.³⁸ With his great reform, the latter emperor seems to have had three aims: re-establishing the original structure of the coinage, issuing 'good' gold and silver coins and reviving the bronze coinage.³⁹ However, although Diocletian's reform brought about an impressive and complete change of the empire's currency, the monetary system was still not stabilized and the economic problems that characterized the third century persisted.⁴⁰

In addition, there were internal problems which did not concern (all) emperors directly, such as epidemics and banditry, but might have had an effect on their policies and visual programs, since they affected a large proportion of the emperors' subjects, or their consequences were disruptive, or both. As for the epidemics, problems started in the second half of

³⁴ Howgego, *Ancient History from Coins*, p. 136; R. Hedlund, "... achieved nothing worthy of memory". *Coinage and Authority in the Roman Empire c. A.D. 260–295* (Uppsala, 2008), p. 6.

³⁵ Ironically, at the beginning of Aurelian's emperorship mint workers committed fraud by issuing coins that were severely debased and underweight. Felicissimus, *rationalis*, seems to have instigated this corruption and, when it came to light, he stirred up a revolt. Aurelius Victor, *De Caesaribus* 35.6; Eutropius 9.14; H.A. Aurelianus 38.3. See Watson, *Aurelian*, pp. 52–53.

³⁶ K. Verboven, "Demise and fall of the Augustan monetary system", in: Hekster, De Kleijn and Slootjes, *Crises and the Roman Empire*, pp. 245–257; p. 256.

³⁷ Harl, *Coinage in the Roman Economy*, p. 146; Callu, *La politique monétaire*, pp. 323–329. See also Zosimus 1.61.3.

³⁸ Harl, *Coinage in the Roman Economy*, pp. 148–157; Corbier, "Coinage and taxation", pp. 334ff.; Callu, *La politique monétaire*, pp. 355ff.

³⁹ Corbier, "Coinage and taxation", pp. 335–336.

⁴⁰ Harl, *Coinage in the Roman Economy*, p. 157.

the second century when the Antonine plague reached the Empire.⁴¹ This disease had enormous long-term consequences on manpower, the leasing of agricultural land, the erection of public buildings and the production of bricks, coins and inscriptions.⁴² In addition to the Antonine plague from which the third-century Empire had to recover, the period 250–280 experienced new attacks of the plague.⁴³ This time, even emperors fell victim to the disease; besides large numbers of people, it took the lives of Hostilian and Claudius Gothicus.⁴⁴

Bandits did, obviously, not only roam around from the third century onward; brigandage also occurred before this period.⁴⁵ Under Severus, however, brigandage became widespread. During the reign of the latter, Bulla Felix, one of the most famous robbers in the Roman world, terrorized Italy's countryside:

At this period one Bulla, an Italian, got together a robber band of about six hundred men, and for two years continued to plunder Italy under the very noses of the emperors and of a multitude of soldiers. For though he was pursued by many men, and though Severus eagerly followed his trail, he was

⁴¹ The Antonine plague reached the Empire in 165, see W. Scheidel, "A model of demographic and economic change in Roman Egypt after the Antonine plague", *JRA* 15.1 (2002) pp. 97–114; p. 97.

⁴² O. Hekster, "The Roman Empire after his death", in: M. van Akeren ed., *A Companion to Marcus Aurelius* (forthcoming). On the effects of the Antonine plague, see R.P. Duncan Jones, "The impact of the Antonine Plague", *JRA* 9 (1996) pp. 108–136; W. Scheidel, *Death and the Nile. Disease and the Demography of Roman Egypt* (Leiden, 2001), pp. 162–166; Scheidel, "A model of demographic and economic change in Roman Egypt after the Antonine plague"; R.S. Bagnall, "The effects of plague: model and evidence", *JRA* 15.1 (2002) pp. 114–120; J. Greenberg, "Plagued by doubt: reconsidering the impact of a mortality crisis in the 2nd c. A.D.", *JRA* 16.2 (2003) pp. 413–25; C. Bruun, "The Antonine plague in Rome and Ostia", *JRA* 16.2 (2003) pp. 426–34; C. Bruun, "The Antonine plague and the 'third-century crisis'", in: Hekster, De Kleijn and Slootjes, *Crises and the Roman Empire*, pp. 201–217.

⁴³ See for example Cyprian, *De Mortalitate* 14–15. Obviously, with respect to the effects of the Antonine plague regional differentiation has to be taken into account. De Blois, "The crisis of the third century A.D. in the Roman Empire", p. 214.

⁴⁴ Hostilian: Aurelius Victor, *De Caesaribus* 30.2; *Epitome de Caesaribus* 30.2. Zosimus reported, however, that Hostilian fell victim to a conspiracy of Trebonianus Gallus, see Zosimus 1.25.1. Claudius Gothicus: Zosimus 1.46.2. See further Drinkwater, "Maximinus to Diocletian and the 'crisis'", pp. 40 and 50. U. Huttner, "Von Maximinus Thrax bis Aemilianus", in: John, Hartmann and Gerhardt, *Die Zeit der Soldatenkaiser*, pp. 161–221; p. 213 and U. Hartmann, "Claudius Gothicus und Aurelianus", in: *ibid.*, pp. 297–323; p. 306.

⁴⁵ T. Grünewald, *Bandits in the Roman Empire. Myth and Reality* (London and New York, 2004) and B. Shaw, "Bandits in the Roman Empire", *Past & Present* 105 (1984), pp. 3–52. On banditry in the Roman Empire, see also W. Riess, *Apuleius und die Räuber. Ein Beitrag zur historischen Kriminalitätsforschung* (Stuttgart, 2001). On brigandage in the third century, see Lorient and Nony, *La crise de l'Empire romain*, pp. 43–48.

never really seen when seen, never found when found, never caught when caught, thanks to his great bribes and his cleverness.⁴⁶

It was only after the emperor's personal interference that the bandit was captured.⁴⁷

Next to Bulla Felix' activities, the literary sources explicitly mention another instance of third-century brigandage, which took place during the reign of Probus in the region of Isauria. Although the *Historia Augusta* and Zosimus seem to refer to the same uprising, they provide us with different information about the event.⁴⁸ First, the bandit is called Palfuerius in the *Historia Augusta*, whereas Zosimus writes about a certain Lydius. Second, the *Historia Augusta* and Zosimus report different ways in which the revolt came to an end; according to the *Historia Augusta* the emperor himself intervened directly, while in Zosimus' account the region was freed by Probus' generals.⁴⁹ Despite these differences, however, the similarities between both accounts indicate that brigands were active in the Isaurian region in the late 270's.⁵⁰

Dynastic instability can be understood as the third category of third-century problems. It could also be considered among the Empire's internal threats, but forms, in comparison with the aforementioned internal difficulties, a different kind of problem since this type of instability directly affected the emperorship as such and the position of the emperor. Only from 193 to 235 did dynastic tendencies prevail.⁵¹ Septimius Severus appointed his sons Caracalla and Geta as successors and hereby created the Severan dynasty. Elagabalus and Severus Alexander legitimized their power by claiming that they descended from this Severan dynasty. Despite, however, the Severan dynasty's dominance from 193 through 235, dynastic problems still surfaced, albeit as exceptions and peculiarities in these years. Caracalla killed his brother Geta, Caracalla was probably murdered by Macrinus and succeeded by him (he became the first equestrian emperor in Roman history and was obviously not a member of the Severan dynasty), Elagabalus ('a young transvestite presenting himself as

⁴⁶ Cass. Dio 77.10.1–2. On Bulla Felix, see Grünewald, *Bandits in the Roman Empire*, pp. 110–36; Shaw, "Bandits in the Roman Empire", pp. 46–49.

⁴⁷ Cass. Dio 77.10.6–7.

⁴⁸ H.A. Probus 16.4–17.1; Zosimus, 1.69–70.

⁴⁹ See further G. Kreucher, *Der Kaiser Marcus Aurelius Probus und seine Zeit* (Stuttgart, 2003), pp. 150–152; N. Lenski, "Assimilation and revolt in the territory of Isauria, from the 1st century B.C. to the 6th century A.D.", *JESHO* 42.4 (1999), pp. 413–65; p. 421.

⁵⁰ Lenski, "Assimilation and revolt in the territory of Isauria", p. 421.

⁵¹ Hekster, *Rome and its Empire*, pp. 3–4.

the chief priest to a black stone')⁵² claimed falsely that he was Caracalla's bastard-son, and the fourteen year old emperor Severus Alexander was dominated by his mother.

The Severan dynasty was the only successful third-century dynasty. After Severus Alexander's rule, attempts to create a dynasty were made continuously but always proved unsuccessful. Maximinus Thrax, Philippus Arabs, Decius, Trebonianus Gallus, Valerian, Gallienus and Carus all wished their sons to become their successors. Sometimes, such as in the case of Valerian and Gallienus, they succeeded in pursuing their dynastic line, but only for one generation. The military problems and, consequently, the emperors' dependence on the armed forces played a major role in this dynastic instability. Since the emperors depended heavily on their legions, these troops' power increased, which explains the active military interference in imperial succession. Many third-century rulers were murdered by their own troops and soldiers acclaimed men of their own choice, mostly their generals, emperor. Consequently, emperors succeeded each other rapidly and usurpers sprang up everywhere. As to the appearance of usurpers, the sole reign of Gallienus marked a low point; in the period 253–268 at least eleven men challenged imperial power.⁵³ Yet, despite the fact that these usurpations and rapid changes of emperors affected the stability of imperial power, imperial authority itself did not go through a crisis: '... the idea that the empire should still be ruled by an emperor does not seem ever to have been challenged'.⁵⁴

Regarding the aforementioned difficulties, a distinction should be made between the first and the second half of the century. In the second half of the third century the Roman Empire had to cope with the external and internal problems, especially the political-military threats from both outside and inside the Empire, in unprecedented dimensions. As Witschel argues, in the period 250–284 'finden sich keine Anzeichen mehr für eine besondere wirtschaftliche Dynamik, während aus vielen Gebieten

⁵² Ibid., p. 4.

⁵³ Ingenuus, Regalian, Macrian Senior, Macrian Junior, Quietus, Piso, Valens, Ballista, Mussius Aemilian, Memor, Aureolus. The *Historia Augusta* also mentions Trebellianus (H.A. Thirty pretenders 26), Celsus (H.A. Thirty pretenders 29 and H.A. Claudius Gothicus 7.4) and Saturninus (H.A. Gallienus 9.1; H.A. Thirty pretenders 23; H.A. Firmus, Saturninus, Proculus, and Bonosus 11.1) as usurpers during Gallienus' reign. Presumably, they were invented by the author. See D. Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle. Grundzüge einer römischen Kaiserchronologie* (Darmstadt, 2010), pp. 223–230.

⁵⁴ Hedlund, "... achieved nothing worthy of memory", p. 9.

deutliche Hinweise auf weit verbreitete Schwierigkeiten vorliegen'.⁵⁵ This stands in contrast with the situation in the first half of the third century. In the period up to the reign of the emperor Decius, the Empire did experience difficulties but they were more regionally differentiated and they occurred less simultaneously. Because of the intensified internal and external troubles the Roman Empire passed in the years 250–284 through a period of exceptional weakness, especially in the political-military realm.⁵⁶

Next to the above described external and internal problems, however, other important events and developments occurred in the period 193–284. First, Caracalla issued the *Constitutio Antoniniana* in 215, which made all free inhabitants of the Roman Empire Roman citizens.⁵⁷ Caracalla's motives for the issuance of the edict are obscure. Whereas the papyrus which provides us with the Greek translation of the decree suggests that Caracalla might have intended it as an appeasement to the gods 'who had preserved him from Geta's coup', Dio states that the decree was a hidden tax-raising measure.⁵⁸ Other motives may also have played a part; Caracalla might have wanted to create a bond between him and his subjects or to 'boost Roman identity'.⁵⁹ Be that as it may, the *Constitutio Antoniniana* can be considered a landmark within the spread of Roman citizenship and the unification of the Empire.

Second, the thousandth anniversary of the city of Rome fell within the reign of Philippus Arabs, namely on the 21st of April in 248. In order to celebrate the birthday of the founding of Rome, gladiatorial games were held, games with animals and chariot races took place in the Circus Maximus, and during three days the Campus Martius hosted theatre games.⁶⁰ Both literary and numismatic sources testify to these events.⁶¹ The

⁵⁵ Witschel, *Krise-Rezession-Stagnation?*, p. 375. Pace R.P. Duncan-Jones, "Economic change and the transition to late antiquity", in: S. Swain and M. Edwards, *Approaching Late Antiquity. The Transformation from Early to Late Empire* (Oxford, 2004), pp. 20–52.

⁵⁶ Witschel, *Krise-Rezession-Stagnation?*, p. 376.

⁵⁷ With the exception of the *dediticii*. On the *Constitutio Antoniniana*, see for instance A.N. Sherwin-White, *The Roman citizenship*, 2nd edition (Oxford, 1973), pp. 380–394; Hekster, *Rome and its Empire*, pp. 45–55.

⁵⁸ Papyrus *Gissensis* 40, col. 1.1–12; Cass. Dio 78.9.4–5. See also below, p. 227 with n. 11.

⁵⁹ Hekster, *Rome and its Empire*, p. 49. See also below, p. 217 and p. 227.

⁶⁰ C. Körner, *Philippus Arabs. Ein Soldatenkaiser in der Tradition des antoninisch-severischen Prinzipats* (Berlin and New York, 2002), p. 253. See also Lorient and Nony, *La crise de l'Empire romain*, pp. 183–186.

⁶¹ H.A. The Three Gordians 33.2; *Hieronymi Chronicon* 217d; *RIC* IV.3, Philippus I, nos. 12–24c), 158–164.

celebration of the thousandth anniversary of the city would mark both Rome's eternity and the beginning of a new and prosperous age. Coins bearing the legend SAECVLVM NOVVM give evidence of the latter.⁶² That the celebration which took place during Philippus' reign also had significance for later emperors is proven by the SAECVLVM NOVVM coin types that were minted by Hostilian, Trebonianus Gallus and Volusian.⁶³

Third, the third century was a decisive period regarding the development of Christianity.⁶⁴ Next to the theological and material base that the Christian Church acquired in this period, the Christian part of the population increased rapidly.⁶⁵ The rising prominence of Christians created difficulties, since an increasing number of the Empire's inhabitants did not participate in sacrifices to the Roman gods, thereby disturbing the *pax deorum*. Before 249, this only led to local persecutions, initiated by pressure from below.⁶⁶ The year 249, however, marks the edict of the emperor Decius, who ordered that all inhabitants of the Empire were to sacrifice to the gods of the Empire and swear an oath. Because many Christians would not be able to make the sacrifice, the decree resulted in their conviction. Although it is not clear whether the edict was targeted against the Christians from the beginning, it was the first time that Christianity was pulled into matters of state.⁶⁷ Under Valerian, Christians were officially persecuted and in this case it is evident that they were initially targeted.⁶⁸

⁶² Körner, *Philippus Arabs*, p. 259. *RIC* IV.3, Philippus I, nos. 25a), 25b), 86a), 86b); *RIC* IV.3, Philippus II, no. 244.

⁶³ *RIC* IV.3, Hostilianus, nos. 205a), 205b); *RIC* IV.3, Trebonianus Gallus, nos. 90, 91; *RIC* IV.3, Volusianus, nos. 222, 235–236b).

⁶⁴ Next to Christianity, Manicheism also rose in the third-century Roman Empire, see Frye, "The Sassanians", pp. 475–476; Hekster, *Rome and its Empire*, p. 78.

⁶⁵ See J. Curran, *Pagan City and Christian Capital* (Oxford, 2000) p. 35. See also K. Hopkins, "Christian number and its implication", *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 6.2 (1998), pp. 185–226; p. 198 and R. Stark, *The Rise of Christianity: a Sociologist Reconsiders History* (Princeton, 1996), p. 7.

⁶⁶ G. Clarke, "Third-century christianity", in: Bowman, Garnsey and Cameron, *CAH* 12², pp. 589–671; p. 616. Seminal remains G.E.M. de Ste. Croix, "Why were the early Christians persecuted?", *Past & Present* 26 (1963), pp. 6–38; p. 6. On these local persecutions, see for instance Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 6.1–5; Tertullian, *De Corona Militis*; Tertullian, *Scorpiace*; Tertullian *Ad Scapulam*; the *Passio* of Perpetua and Felicitas.

⁶⁷ Rives, "The decree of Decius and the religion of empire", pp. 135–154; I. Gradel, *Emperor Worship and Roman Religion* (Oxford, 2002), p. 368 and Clarke, "Third-century Christianity", p. 626. See also Manders, "Communicating messages through coins", pp. 1–22. See also below, pp. 253–254

⁶⁸ On Valerian's religious policy, see C.J. Haas, "Imperial religious policy and Valerian's persecution of the Church, A.D. 257–260", *Church History* 52.2 (1983), pp. 133–144; pp. 135–136.

An imperial edict issued in 257 called for the banishment of the upper clergy and forbade Christians to gather together as well as to visit their cemeteries.⁶⁹ In addition, Valerian sent an imperial rescript to the senate in 258 by which he obliged Christians of the upper classes to give up their property and ordered all bishops, priests and deacons to be punished. Valerian's policy resulted in a bloody persecution; many Christians, under whom pope Sixtus II and the Carthaginian bishop Cyprian were martyred.⁷⁰ Gallienus, however, broke rigorously with the religious policy of his father and effectively granted the Christians freedom of religion; he put an end to persecutions, returned places of worship to the churches and permitted bishops to recover Christian cemeteries.⁷¹ This 'peace of Gallienus' lasted until Diocletian started with his Great Persecution in 303.⁷²

Fourth, the third century, and more specifically the Severan age, marked a decisive period in the development of Roman law.⁷³ Under the Severans, jurists obtained important administrative positions and legal science reached its zenith.⁷⁴ In these years, jurists became influential persons at the imperial court as a result of the many legal appeals that were made to the centre, imperial interests and through patronage and recommendation. In this way, they acquired an important position within the emperor's entourage.⁷⁵ Illustrative to this point is the fact that

⁶⁹ *Acta Proconsularia Sancti Cypriani* 1.1; Cyprian, *Epistulae* 76–79; *Acta Proconsularia* 1.4; *Acta Proconsularia* 1.7; Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 7.11.10 and 7.11.4.

⁷⁰ Cyprian, *Epistulae* 80.1; Augustine, *Sermo* 273.7; *Acta Proconsularia* 2–5. See further Clarke, "Third-century christianity", p. 643; Hekster, *Rome and its Empire*, p. 74; Haas, "Imperial religious policy and Valerian's persecution of the Church", p. 136.

⁷¹ Orosius, *Historiarum adversus paganos libri VII* 7.22; Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 7.13.1. See further P. Keresztes, "The peace of Gallienus: 260–303 A.D.", *WS* (1975), pp. 174–222; L. de Blois, "Christians and Roman imperial politics. The changing position of christians in the third century A.D.", *Het Christelijke oosten. Tijdschrift van het Instituut voor Oosters Christendom* 53, 1–2 (2001), pp. 105–123; pp. 121–23; Clarke, "Third-century christianity", pp. 645–47.

⁷² Keresztes, "The peace of Gallienus", pp. 174–185; Clarke, "Third-century christianity", p. 646.

⁷³ On (the development of) law in Late Antiquity, see J. Harries, *Law and Empire in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, 1999).

⁷⁴ David Ibbetson, "High classical law", in: Bowman, Garnsey and Cameron, *CAH* 12², pp. 184–199; pp. 184–186.

⁷⁵ L. de Blois, "Roman jurists and the crisis of the third century A.D. in the Roman empire", in: idem ed., *Administration, Prosopography and Appointment Policies in the Roman Empire. IMEM 1* (Amsterdam, 2001), pp. 136–153; p. 141, pp. 143–147. Septimius Severus seems, in fact, to have been particularly interested in law (see Cass. Dio 76.17.1). After c. 241 the dominance of the jurists at the imperial court came to an end. From that moment onward, military and logistic specialists took over their positions.

at least three judicial specialists, Papinian, Messius and Ulpian, became praetorian prefect, which was the highest office that was available for non-senators within the Roman Empire.⁷⁶ Moreover, the judicial texts that were produced in the age of the Severan emperors can be considered the foundations of modern legal law. Half of the texts in Justinian's *Digest* were based on the writings of the Severan jurists Ulpian and Paul.⁷⁷ In addition, regarding legal argument, the Law of Citations ascribes authority solely to Papinian, Paul, Gaius, Ulpian and Modestinus', of whom only Gaius did not write in the third century.⁷⁸ Thus, the short period in which the Severan dynasty held sway over the Empire may well be called 'the great age of the jurists'.⁷⁹

In broad outlines, these were the external and internal problems as well as the important events and developments that characterized the third century. Under these conditions the emperors in the period 193–284 had chosen their coin types. In comparison with the century before, which has been marked as the happiest and most prosperous period in the history of mankind by Edward Gibbon in 1776, it is obvious that the third-century Augusti had to rule in straitened circumstances, some third-century emperors struggling more than others.⁸⁰ Especially in difficult times, the representation of imperial power, which is central to this book, was of vital importance. By presenting themselves as the right men in the right place, the emperors hoped to claim the subjects' loyalty through which their individual positions might be safeguarded.⁸¹ Moreover, by emphasizing shared successes an appeal could be made to a collective identity which might have influenced the unity within the Empire.⁸²

⁷⁶ De Blois, "Roman jurists", p. 136. See also Hekster, *Rome and its Empire*, p. 46.

⁷⁷ Ibbetson, "High classical law", p. 186.

⁷⁸ *Codex Theodosianus* 1.4.3. See Ibbetson, "High classical law", p. 186.

⁷⁹ See for instance Hekster, *Rome and its Empire*, p. 46.

⁸⁰ E. Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (Ware, 1998), pp. 65–66. See now also W. Jongman, "Gibbon was right: the decline and fall of the Roman economy", in: Hekster, De Kleijn and Slootjes, *Crises and the Roman Empire*, pp. 183–199; p. 199.

⁸¹ C. Ando, *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire* (Berkeley, 2000).

⁸² On the influence of imperial ideology on the unity within the Empire, see Ando, *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty*.

2. REPRESENTING IMPERIAL POWER

2.1. *Concepts and theories*

Power is... a far more complex and mysterious quality than any apparently simple manifestation of it would appear. It is as much a matter of impression, of theatre, of persuading those over whom authority is wielded to conclude in their subjugation.⁸³

It is not easy to grasp the exact meaning of a concept so comprehensive and, at the same time, so widely used as the term 'power'. In a critique on Mann's much-used theory of power, Whitmeyer defines power as 'the ability to affect the probability that others will perform some behaviour'.⁸⁴ This broad definition in no way limits the possession of power; power is not necessarily restricted to particular individuals or groups within a given society. Although it is obvious that different types of power are meant here, relations of power exist in the public sphere (for instance, between a political leader and his or her subjects) as well as in the private realm (for instance, between parents and their children).

The ways in which power can be attained vary. When we narrow the concept 'power' further and apply it to the authority that the Roman emperors wielded over their subjects in the third century A.D., the emperors' means of attaining the purple illustrate various methods of power acquisition; some appealed, rightly or not, to their ancestry and claimed the supreme rule in this way, whereas the majority of third-century rulers used their legions to acquire the imperial throne.

Furthermore, the wielding of power is inextricably bound up with the representation of power. Elsner's observation that power is 'a matter

⁸³ Elsner, *Imperial Rome and Christian Triumph*, p. 53.

⁸⁴ J.M. Whitmeyer, "Mann's theory of power – a (sympathetic) critique", *The British Journal of Sociology* 48.2 (1997), pp. 210–225; p. 211. Mann understands power as the control over human and material resources, and distinguishes four sources of social power: ideological, economic, military and political relationships, see M. Mann, *The Sources of Social Power. Vol. 1: A History of Power from the Beginning to A.D. 1760* (Cambridge, 1986), p. 2. Cf. also famously Weber: 'the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests' (see M. Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization* (translated from *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* by A.M. Henderson and T. Parsons, New York 1947, p. 152). For further examples, see now A.H. Arweiler and B.M. Gauly eds., *Machtfragen. Zur kulturellen Repräsentation und Konstruktion von Macht in Antike, Mittelalter und Neuzeit* (Stuttgart, 2008) and, for antiquity, Ando, *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty*, pp. 19–47.

of... persuading those over whom authority is wielded to collude in their subjugation', illustrates this very well.⁸⁵ Before elaborating on the link between wielding power and its representation, however, the concept 'representation' needs to be clarified.⁸⁶ 'Representation' can be defined as a symbolic rendering in text or image that can provide an insight into social relations and the ideals, standards and values involved.⁸⁷ When we apply this definition to the Roman emperor, the representation of imperial power can thus be used to spread imperial ideology.⁸⁸

To avoid misunderstanding, ideology must not be conceived as a coherent whole, it consists of different different layers or, in other words, of different types of messages. The imperial ideology communicated under Augustus provides the best example of this. By disseminating several sorts of messages, and thus several ideologies, it was possible to reach various sorts of audiences. This ensured that Augustus' reign could appeal to more than one section of the population.⁸⁹ Thus, when the concept of ideology will be mentioned in the following, no monolithic ideology is meant but the whole of ideological exponents. In addition, ideology is not static, '... it constantly adjusts and readjusts, being part of a living society'.⁹⁰ This dynamic character of ideology is reflected perfectly by Thompson's definition of ideology in *Ideology and Modern Culture*; he describes ideology as 'the ways in which the meaning constructed and conveyed by symbolic forms serves, in particular circumstances, to establish and sustain structured social relations from which some individuals and groups benefit

⁸⁵ This echoes T. Hobbes, *Leviathan* 1.10 (edited by E. Curley, Indianapolis, 1994), pp. 50–51.

⁸⁶ Besides the meaning ascribed to 'representation' used here, 'representation' can also imply people who act, symbolic or concrete, on the behalf of other persons or organs. The only form of representation discussed in this book, however, consists of a symbolic rendering in text or image. On symbolic representation in general, see further S. Hall ed., *Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (London, 1997).

⁸⁷ G. Weber and M. Zimmermann, "Propaganda, Selbstdarstellung und Repräsentation. Die Leitbegriffe des Kolloquiums in der Forschung zur frühen Kaiserzeit", in: G. Weber and M. Zimmermann eds., *Propaganda- Selbstdarstellung- Repräsentation im römischen Kaiserreich des 1. Jhs. n. Chr.* (Stuttgart, 2003), pp. 11–40; p. 36.

⁸⁸ See M. Sturken and L. Cartwright, *Practices of Looking: an Introduction to Visual Culture* (Oxford, 2001), p. 56 on the relation between representation and ideology in modern times.

⁸⁹ On the representation of Augustus, see P. Zanker, *Augustus und die Macht der Bilder* (Munich, 1987).

⁹⁰ Hekster, *Commodus*, p. 10.

more than others, and which some individuals and groups have an interest in preserving while others may seek to contest'.⁹¹

The fact that imperial ideology was dynamic and not a coherent whole can be linked to the way in which ideology, and therefore its representation, was established, namely through a dialogue between the Roman emperor (together with his entourage) and his subjects: '... es wäre fatal, alles einer zentral gelenkten Maschinerie unterzuordnen'.⁹² Without a dialogue between the highest levels of imperial administration and the lower levels in Roman society, alienation must have been unavoidable. How, then, could imperial ideology serve as a binding agent within the Roman Empire when there would have been an unbridgeable gap between the central authority and the inhabitants of the Roman Empire?⁹³ Furthermore, for the emperor it was dangerous not to anticipate what different sections of the Roman population expected from him; there are examples available of Roman emperors who did not (or not sufficiently) care about their subjects' expectations and died a violent death.⁹⁴ The argument, however, must not be pushed too far; in the end, emperors, or at least the 'imperial center', were decisive to their own 'visual program'. Moreover, active participation of a large proportion of the Roman population in establishing imperial ideology was nearly impossible if only because of practical reasons.

Ideology could thus be spread by means of representation. Is it, however, also appropriate to use the term 'propaganda' instead of 'representation' with respect to the spreading of imperial messages in the Roman Empire? This problem has been addressed by many modern scholars.⁹⁵ As already demonstrated, it is important to use clear definitions for concepts linked to communication. If clearly defined, it can be useful to apply modern concepts to the ancient world and, in this, also to compare different periods of history. Avoiding modern concepts could 'all too easily lead to a confusing array of equally circumspect semi-synonyms'.⁹⁶ However, it is

⁹¹ J.B. Thompson, *Ideology and Modern Culture. Critical Theory in the Era of Mass Communication* (Stanford, 1990), p. 294.

⁹² Weber and Zimmermann, "Propaganda, Selbstdarstellung und Repräsentation", p. 24.

⁹³ On ideology as binding agent, see Ando, *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty*.

⁹⁴ The emperors Elagabalus (218–222) and Maximinus Thrax (235–238) are examples of this.

⁹⁵ For an overview of various opinions on this topic, see Weber and Zimmermann, *Propaganda- Selbstdarstellung- Repräsentation*.

⁹⁶ Hekster, *Commodus*, p. 9.

often necessary to strip these concepts of their modern connotations and, consequently, define them broadly. The term 'propaganda' is, to the modern mind, particularly associated with totalitarian regimes that held sway during specific periods in the previous century.⁹⁷ To make this concept work in ancient terms, I apply the following definition of 'propaganda': 'The deliberate attempt to influence public opinion through the transmission of ideas and values for a specific purpose'.⁹⁸ This definition renders the concept of propaganda more powerful than the term representation but not therefore less useful. While using the aforementioned definition of propaganda, it is still possible to acknowledge the dialogue taking place between emperor and people with regard to imperial ideology. Therefore, I argue, it is certainly valid to use the term propaganda in connection with the 'machine' that spreads imperial ideology in the Roman Empire.⁹⁹

Then, returning to the connection between the representation of power and the wielding of it, the representation of imperial power was necessary to legitimize the emperor's authority, which was in turn vital for maintaining his supreme rule.¹⁰⁰ This is, in short, the view of power taken in this research, as 'a matter of . . . persuading those over whom authority is wielded to collude in their subjugation'.¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ Illustrative for this point is the definition of 'propaganda' provided by Sturken and Cartwright: 'the crude process of using false representations to lure people into holding beliefs that may compromise their own interests' (Sturken and Cartwright, *Practices of Looking*, p. 21).

⁹⁸ N.J. Cull, D. Culbert, D. Welch, *Propaganda and Mass Persuasion: A Historical Encyclopedia, 1500 to the Present* (Santa Barbara, 2003), p. 318.

⁹⁹ Ellul distinguishes between 'agitation propaganda' (changing attitudes) and 'integration propaganda' (reinforcing attitudes). See J. Ellul, *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes* (New York, 1965).

¹⁰⁰ Pace J.E. Lendon, "The legitimacy of the Roman emperor: against Weberian legitimacy and imperial 'strategies of legitimation'", in: A. Kolb ed., *Herrschaftsstrukturen und Herrschaftspraxis. Konzepte, Prinzipien und Strategien der Administration im römischen Kaiserreich. Akten der Tagung an der Universität Zürich 18.-20.10.2004* (Berlin, 2006), pp. 53–63.

¹⁰¹ In addition to legitimization, representation of power could also (and of course simultaneously) be employed for information and glorification. The last objective is the most conspicuous and therefore the most treacherous one; it can provide the concept 'representation of power' with a negative connotation and moreover it can obscure its pluriform character.

2.2. *Communicating imperial ideology*

Any form of representation makes use of media. Various media could contain (symbolic) references to imperial power and present a particular picture of the emperor, for instance imperial and provincial coinage, reliefs and imperial portraits, literary and administrative texts, texts of law, petitions, votive inscriptions, games, and imperial appearances. Together they convey a visual program presenting imperial ideology.¹⁰²

Ancient media used for dissemination of messages have to be understood in their proper contexts. Important in this matter is ascertaining the original function of the particular message bearers. For the analyses presented in this book, this means that the principal motive lying behind the production of coins has to be clarified. Imperial coins were struck first and foremost to serve as means of state payment, the army being its largest recipient.¹⁰³ Coins were thus originally minted and brought into circulation because of economic needs. Yet, this need not mean that coins' ideological importance should be undervalued; the repeated introduction of new types gives evidence of coins' significance in the distribution of messages.¹⁰⁴ Moreover, the ideological value of coins is demonstrated by the fact that emperors, the short-lived ones included, issued coin types immediately after their accession, that even usurpers who claimed the imperial throne for a short time minted their own coins and that the minting of coins by other persons than the emperor was considered a challenge to imperial power.¹⁰⁵ The latter can be illustrated by an account of Herodian, who reports that soldiers showed coins bearing a portrait of Perennis, the commander of the Praetorian Guard, to the emperor Commodus. Before this moment, Commodus did not believe that Perennis wanted to betray him. After he saw the coins, however, he recognized the danger and executed Perennis.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² On 'visual program' and image as 'semantisches System' see still T. Hölscher, *Römische Bildsprache als semantisches System* (Heidelberg, 1987).

¹⁰³ F. Kemmers, *Coins for a Legion*, p. 240 (with n. 763). For an overview of the state's expenditure, see R. Duncan-Jones, *Money and Government in the Roman Empire* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 33–46.

¹⁰⁴ See below, pp. 36 and 53.

¹⁰⁵ For instance Domitian II (271) and Proculus (280) issued coins, see O. Hekster and E. Manders, "Kaiser gegen Kaiser: Bilder der Macht im 3. Jahrhundert", in: K.-P. Johne, U. Hartmann and T. Gerhardt, *Deleto paene imperio Romano. Transformationsprozesse des römischen Reiches im 3. Jahrhundert und ihre Rezeption in der Neuzeit* (Stuttgart, 2006), pp. 135–144; p. 135.

¹⁰⁶ Herodian 1.9.2–7.

Another aspect of contextualizing this medium consists of mapping its scope. How many people could be informed by coins? Who came in touch with imperial coins and who actually understood them? A coin, ancient or modern, has a widespread effect; 'it will be an object existing in multiple copies that will be distributed to a large number of people who may be scattered over a wide geographical area'.¹⁰⁷ Consequently, many people came in touch with coins and, thus, with the messages present on them.

The scope of this particular medium was not only limited geographically; levels of literacy also were an issue in how many people were actually reached by the disseminated messages. On coins, text and image often work closely together. On many coins the image either presents a visualization of the legend or the legend forms a textual rendering of the image. This cooperation between text and image facilitated not only illiterates' understanding of the messages present on coins, it also reduced the various possibilities of how Romans could interpret a message.¹⁰⁸ In other words, it limited different practices of looking.¹⁰⁹ In many cases, the combination of text and images therefore provides a key to the modern scholar analyzing coins' messages; it clarifies how the majority of the Romans may well have interpreted those messages.¹¹⁰

The material of which the message bearer was made and that decided its value also influenced the size of the audience that came in touch with it. As for coins, it is hard to imagine that the poor frequently (if at all) used coins of high denominations or had access to medallions.¹¹¹

Finally, in regards to the issue of responsibility for the contents of the messages that were spread by coins, there is the question as to who actually decided on which messages had to be spread. As for Republican coins,

¹⁰⁷ C. King, "Roman portraiture: images of power?", in: Paul and M. Ierardi, *Roman Coins and Public Life under the Empire*, pp. 123–136; p. 124. On the circulation of coins see for instance C. Howgego, "Coin circulation and the integration of the Roman economy", *JRA* 7 (1994), pp. 5–21.

¹⁰⁸ On the extent to which coin types were understood, see below, pp. 35–36.

¹⁰⁹ Different people look at imagery in different ways. Concerning the practice of looking, see especially Sturken and Cartwright, *Practices of Looking*. See further J.R. Clarke, *Art in the Lives of Ordinary Romans* (Berkeley, 2003); Elsner, *Imperial Rome and Christian Triumph*; Elsner, *Art and the Roman Viewer*; Zanker, *Augustus und die Macht der Bilder*.

¹¹⁰ Obviously, the interpretation of a coin's message also depended on the background of the person who looked at the particular coin, as well as on the context in which the coin was used.

¹¹¹ Although *donativa* could consist of gold coins and the poor had thus access to them, these coins would have come into the hands of the rich rapidly, see C. Rowan, *Under Divine Auspices. Patron Deities and the Visualisation of Imperial Power in the Severan Period* (unpublished diss. Sydney, 2009), p. 97 with n. 269.

this information can easily be retrieved since they featured the names of the responsible magistrates or referred to their families' feats. On coins of the Empire, the names of the *tresviri* and the achievements of their families gave way to the names of the emperors and their successes. This, however, does not necessarily imply that the emperors also were responsible for minting, although some ancient texts seem to hint at this. Suetonius, for example, writes that Augustus minted a silver coin displaying a Capricorn, the constellation under which the emperor would have been born,¹¹² and that Nero, after his return from Greece, issued a coin picturing a cither player.¹¹³ Moreover, the anonymous author of the late antique work *De rebus bellicis* reports that he had submitted designs of coins for approval to the emperor.¹¹⁴ When the emperors did not choose the coin types themselves, the latter text seems to suggest that the emperor examined the types at least. Yet, the aforementioned passages offer insufficient evidence on the basis of which we can conclude that the emperor was indeed responsible for the coin types. Since, thus, both the coins themselves and the ancient writers do not give any or not enough information as to the persons who were responsible for the coin types, it remains uncertain who actually decided on the types during the Empire.

Nevertheless, attempts in modern literature were made to provide an answer to this question. In 1959, Sutherland published an article in which he argued that the choice of coin types undoubtedly reflected 'the operation of official interest'.¹¹⁵ He came to this conclusion because of the enormous type variety and the differences between the types of one reign and those of another. In contrast with Sutherland's view, Buttrey concluded, on the basis of an analysis of Vespasian's coins, that the mint masters decided on the coin types: '...his [Vespasian's, EM] coins show a strong sense of continuity on the part of the official who authorized them'.¹¹⁶ Levick was also of the opinion that the officials who were responsible for other aspects of the coin production decided on the types. According to

¹¹² Augustus was not born under Capricorn but under Libra. See Crawford, "Roman imperial coin types and the formation of public opinion", p. 52.

¹¹³ Suetonius, *Augustus* 94.12 and *Nero* 25.2. For other examples with respect to the influence of the emperor on coin types, see amongst others Cass. Dio 65.6.1 and 77.12.6; Eusebius, *Vita Constantini* 4.15.1; Sozomen, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 5.19. See also S.R.F. Price, "The divine right of emperors", *CR* 29.2 (1979), pp. 277–79; p. 278.

¹¹⁴ *De rebus bellicis* 3.4.

¹¹⁵ C.H.V., Sutherland, "The intelligibility of Roman imperial coin types", *JRS* 49 (1959), pp. 46–55; p. 52.

¹¹⁶ T.V. Buttrey, "Vespasian as moneyer", *NC* 12 (1972), pp. 89–109; p. 109.

her, this forms ‘the most economical hypothesis’; it is unlikely that the emperor personally selected the coin types.¹¹⁷

Recent contributions to this debate argue that not either the emperor or the mint masters were responsible for the coins types, but both. According to authors that hold this opinion, under whom Wallace-Hadrill and Wolters, messages on coins came into being by means of a cooperation between the emperor and the *tresviri*.¹¹⁸ The argument that the emperor interfered with the coin types when they did not meet his requirements can be adduced as proof for this hypothesis. A telling example of the emperor’s personal interference forms the difference between Hadrian’s first and second series of coins. On the first series, minted during the emperor’s absence from Rome, the emperor was called *pater patriae*, a title which the emperor refused in first instance. The second series of coins, minted during the emperor’s presence in the capital, did not display this particular title anymore.¹¹⁹ The difference between the two series of Hadrian’s coins seems to indicate that the mint masters not only minted coins bearing a particular message on their own initiative, but that the emperors actively interfered with the coin production too.¹²⁰

As follows from the above, no decisive answer can be given regarding the person(s) responsible for the contents of the messages communicated by imperial coins. For this, both the coins themselves and classical literature do not provide enough indications. Nevertheless, on the basis of the aforementioned hypotheses, we can assume that decisions about imagery and legends originated at the top.¹²¹ Whether the emperor himself or officials such as the *tresviri monetales*, the secretary *a rationibus* or the *procurator monetae* had been responsible for minting, each coin struck in an imperial mint can be considered an official document and thus an official expression of imperial authority.¹²² Moreover, whether the coins

¹¹⁷ Levick, “Propaganda and the imperial coinage”, pp. 104–116; p. 107.

¹¹⁸ Wallace-Hadrill, “Image and authority in the coinage of Augustus”, pp. 66–87; p. 79 and R. Wolters, “Die Geschwindigkeit der Zeit und die Gefahr der Bilder: Münzbilder und Münzpropaganda in der römischen Kaiserzeit”, in G. Weber and M. Zimmermann ed., *Propaganda-Selbstdarstellung-Repräsentation im römischen Kaiserreich des 1. Jhs. n.Chr.* (Stuttgart, 2003), pp. 176–204; pp. 185–189.

¹¹⁹ See further A.R. Birley, *Hadrian. The Restless Emperor* (London and New York, 1997), pp. 81 and 201.

¹²⁰ Wolters, “Die Geschwindigkeit der Zeit und die Gefahr der Bilder”, p. 189.

¹²¹ O. Hekster, “The Roman army and propaganda”, in: P. Erdkamp ed., *A Companion to the Roman Army* (Malden, 2007), pp. 339–358; p. 349.

¹²² Wallace-Hadrill, “Image and authority in the coinage of Augustus”, p. 67; Noreña, “The communication of the emperor’s virtues”, p. 147.

were spreading messages *from* or tributes *to* the emperor, they had to display the emperor as he wished to be seen or at least as people within the imperial entourage thought that he wished to be seen.¹²³ One must keep in mind, however, that, as discussed above, messages spread by means of coins almost inevitably anticipated wishes or expectations of particular groups in Roman society.¹²⁴

2.3. *Coins and coin types as indicators for the development of third-century imperial representation*

Coins as vehicles for imperial communications

What kind of messages did imperial coins disseminate? What was put on the obverses and reverses? The obverses of imperial coins usually display portraits of the emperor (and sometimes of other members of the imperial family). As stated before, when the coin's obverse bore a portrait other than that of the emperor (or one of his predecessors or family members),¹²⁵ it is evident that the emperor's authority was challenged and that a claim to power was made by a usurper. This demonstrates that coins and imperial authority were intimately connected, something which is also apparent from the essential function that the obverse's imperial portrait had regarding the coin's valuation and thus its circulation.¹²⁶ This connection between the imperial portrait and the value of coinage is illustrated by a fourth-century legal text:

All *solidi* on which appear Our Face and which have the same degree of veneration must be valued and sold at the same price, although the size of the image may vary. For a *solidus* that is extended with a greater appearance of the Emperor's face is not worth a greater price, nor must one that is compressed with a smaller image be supposed to be of less value, when the weight is the same.¹²⁷

¹²³ Levick, "Propaganda and the imperial coinage"; see further Wallace-Hadrill, "Image and authority in the coinage of Augustus", p. 68; Hekster, *Commodus*, p. 89. See further Howgego, *Ancient History from Coins*, p. 70.

¹²⁴ This is confirmed by examples of audience targeting, see below pp. 36–37 with n. 146.

¹²⁵ On third-century members of the imperial family on coins, see M. Horster, "The emperor's family on coins (third century): ideology of stability in times of unrest", in: Hekster, De Kleijn and Slootjes, *Crises and the Roman Empire*, pp. 291–309.

¹²⁶ J.E. Lendon, "The face on the coins and inflation in Roman Egypt", *Klio* 72 (1990), pp. 112–119.

¹²⁷ *Codex Theodosianus* 9.22.1: *omnes solidi, in quibus nostri vultus ac veneratio una est, uno pretio aestimandi sunt atque vendendi, quamquam diversa formae mensura sit. nec enim*

This text shows that, apparently, there were people who thought that, since the imperial portrait decided the coin's value, the value of coins would change with the size of the emperor's portrait.¹²⁸ It demonstrates that the imperial portrait contributed to the identification of coinage with the emperor, something which is also made clear by a passage in the New Testament:

They brought Him a *denarius*, and He said to them, 'whose portrait is this? and whose inscription?' and they said to Him: 'Caesar's.' Then He said to them 'Give unto Caesar what is Caesar's'.¹²⁹

The reverses could also contain an imperial portrait. These imperial portraits, on most obverses and some reverses, show the emperor in a particular role, for instance as citizen, general, consul, family member, and companion of the gods.¹³⁰ On the obverse, next to the imperial portrait, the emperor's titulature is displayed. Like the emperor's portrait, the imperial titulature also has an important function; it propagates the emperor's functions and, by means of incorporating them in the emperor's titulature, it could also emphasize other important facts, such as for instance military victories.

On the reverses, the legend and design present an image of the emperor or his reign in a broader sense. Wishes or promises concerning the future, a special connection between the emperor and one or more deities, important deeds of the emperor, significant events; all kinds of messages were put on the coins' reverses. These messages are linked to the emperor and his reign by means of its content or the fact that the portrait of the emperor on the obverse and the message on the reverse belong to the same coin or both. In contrast with the reverses, the obverses were more static and less susceptible to major changes over the course of the Empire. The reverses changed more easily; almost during every reign new types were introduced.

Thus, imperial coinage proves to be valuable for interpreting the image of imperial power during the course of the third century that circulated through large parts of the Roman Empire. It can be seen as a message

qui maiore habitu faciei extenditur, maioris est pretii, aut qui angustiore expressione concluditur, minoris valere credendus est, quum pondus idem existat. The italics in the translation are mine.

¹²⁸ Lendon, "The face on the coins and inflation in Roman Egypt", p. 115.

¹²⁹ Matthew 22.21 (the italics are mine). See also Mark 12.17 and Luke 20.24.

¹³⁰ King, "Roman portraiture: images of power?", p. 127.

medium, as a 'vehicle for imperial communications'.¹³¹ The latter, however, has not always been *communis opinio*.¹³² In 1956 Arnold Jones published an article in which he strongly reacted on the dominant view held at that time, namely that the imagery on Roman coins should be interpreted literally.¹³³ Jones compared the coins with modern stamps and, by disbelieving that the 'elaborate messages which some numismatists deduce from coin types were intended to be conveyed by them . . .', he questioned the importance of coins as message medium.¹³⁴ In his scepticism he was followed by others, among whom Michael Crawford. The latter argued that 'the mint is presumably following a general directive to make the coinage as like earlier coinage as possible; the result is as far removed from anything resembling propaganda as one can imagine'.¹³⁵ The critique of the sceptics who doubted the function of coins as message medium was mainly based on two observations. First, classical authors hardly refer to the imagery on coins and when they do, they only pay attention to the issuing authority.¹³⁶ Second, no evidence can be found which proves people's understanding of coin types.¹³⁷

Both kinds of critique can be refuted. As to the first one, the strongest counter-argument against this *argumentum ex silentio* implies that we should not expect ancient historiographers to report about matters with which they came in touch so often and were therefore obvious to them, such as coins.¹³⁸ Another counter-argument that was provided encompasses the fact that most ancient historians were annalists, whereas coins

¹³¹ Noreña, "The communication of the emperor's virtues", p. 147. Nieto Soría already mentions 'vehicles for propaganda and legitimation' (M. Nieto Soría, "Propaganda and legitimation in Castile. Religion and Church, 1250–1500", in: A. Ellenius ed., *Iconography, Propaganda, and Legitimation* (Oxford, 1998), pp. 105–119; pp. 107–117). On such vehicles see especially R. Chartier, "Construction de l'État moderne et formes culturelles: perspective et questions", in: J. Vigueur and C. Pietri eds., *Culture et idéologie dans la genèse de l'État moderne* (Rome, 1985), pp. 491–503; pp. 497–501. Both authors, however, use this term in another historic context.

¹³² For a more detailed overview of the debate, see Hedlund, "... achieved nothing worthy of memory", pp. 29–31.

¹³³ See for example *RIC* I, p. 22.

¹³⁴ Jones, "Numismatics and history", pp. 13–33; p. 15.

¹³⁵ Crawford, "Roman imperial coin types and the formation of public opinion", p. 59. See also Buttrely, "Vespasian as moneyer", pp. 101–109; A. Wallace-Hadrill, "Galba's Aequitas", *NC* 141 (1981), pp. 20–39; pp. 36f.

¹³⁶ Crawford, "Roman imperial coin types and the formation of public opinion", p. 51f.

¹³⁷ Jones, "Numismatics and history", p. 15; Crawford, "Roman imperial coin types and the formation of public opinion", pp. 47–64.

¹³⁸ A. Cheung, "The political significance of Roman imperial coin types", *SchwMbl* 191 (1998), pp. 53–61; pp. 60f.

did not refer to contemporary circumstances on a regular basis. Thus, there simply would have been little need for the authors to refer to imagery on coinage.¹³⁹ Finally, there has been offered a, in my view, less plausible rebuttal; Sutherland suggests that, since many ancient historiographers were ill-disposed towards the emperor, they might have ignored coins since they symbolized imperial authority.¹⁴⁰ Then, however, the fact that these authors, under whom the third-century writers Dio and Herodian, did pay much attention to the emperor in their works would be paradoxical; if they wanted to avoid associations with the emperor or with imperial authority altogether, probably the authors had also focussed less on the emperor himself.

Against the second argument, the presumed unintelligibility of coin types, the following objections can be raised. Even if people were illiterate, the images on the coins, especially the portraits of the emperor, were probably not difficult to understand.¹⁴¹ In addition, it is argued that the most important recipients of coins, such as the military and the local elites, were literate.¹⁴² Moreover, symbols that were particular to coinage (for instance the goddess Victoria, globe, *cornucopiae*, trophies) were found in numerous parts of the private sphere, such as on jewels, furniture, and tombs. This possibly indicates that coin types were indeed understood.¹⁴³ Another counter-argument can be added. The introduction of new coin types which occurred repeatedly during each reign could not be explained when most of the recipients would not have understood the imagery on the coins.¹⁴⁴

Next to the aforementioned refutations of the arguments that were used to question the importance of coinage as vehicle for communications, recent research by Fleur Kemmers makes it even more difficult to deny coins' function of communicating messages. Kemmers shows that coin types which were sent to a particular region could contain imagery

¹³⁹ C.H.V. Sutherland, "Compliment or complement? Dr Levick on imperial coin types", *NC* 146 (1986), pp. 85–93; pp. 86–87.

¹⁴⁰ Sutherland, "Compliment or complement", pp. 86f.

¹⁴¹ C.H.V. Sutherland, "The intelligibility of Roman imperial coin types", *JRS* 49 (1959), pp. 46–55; p. 53. See also above, p. 30.

¹⁴² C.T.H.R. Ehrhardt, "Roman coin types and the Roman public", *JNG* 34 (1984), pp. 41–54; p. 47; Howgego, *Ancient History from Coins*, p. 77; Wolters, "Die Geschwindigkeit der Zeit und die Gefahr der Bilder", pp. 189f. and 193–195.

¹⁴³ Howgego, *Ancient History from Coins*, p. 74.

¹⁴⁴ Under the reigns of Septimius Severus, Caracalla, Gallienus and Probus extremely high numbers of coin types were issued; respectively 933, 815, 1154 and 929 types were minted during the particular emperors' reigns.

that was relevant for the political situation of that area.¹⁴⁵ For example, in A.D. 71 coin types propagating Victoria, Securitas and Aequitas were dominant in Lower Germany, the area where the Batavian revolt just had been suppressed. In the same year, coin types featuring Securitas and Roma (as ruler) prevailed in Upper Germany, the region in which the struggle for power between the generals had come to an end the year before, whereas coin types with Victoria and the eagle (referring to the Roman legions) dominated in Britannia, where the year 71 marked the starting signal for Cerialis' campaigns against tribes in Wales and Scotland. Lastly, coin types propagating Pax and Roma (as tutelary deity) had the upper hand in Italy in 71; in this year peace was restored after the disruptive civil wars.

The above micro-analyses demonstrate that imagery was put deliberately on coinage. Moreover, they show that coins could target specific audiences, which confirms that messages were not sent into a vacuum but with the recipients in mind.¹⁴⁶ The latter notion underlies the research presented in this book. An examination of the messages' reception, however, is beyond the scope of the present study.¹⁴⁷ An analysis of reception would involve mapping coin circulation as well as interaction between imperial and provincial coinage, which will both be hampered by the fact that, for the greater part, third-century imperial coins cannot be dated accurately.¹⁴⁸ It suffices here to say that, as argued above, the creation of imperial ideology took place through a dialogue between the central authorities and the people, which means that the emperor and his entourage must have considered the people's image of imperial power and, perhaps, used it to create their own.

¹⁴⁵ Kemmers, *Coins for a Legion*, pp. 223–242.

¹⁴⁶ For more examples on audience targeting, see Lummel, 'Zielgruppen' römischer Staatskunst; Hekster, "Coins and messages", pp. 20–35.

¹⁴⁷ On the reception of imperial power, see for instance C. Witschel, *Propaganda für den Princeps? Mechanismen der kaiserlichen Repräsentation im Imperium Romanum* (forthcoming, 2011), C.F. Noreña, *Imperial Ideals in the Roman West: Representation, Circulation, Power* (forthcoming, 2011) and the results of the research program 'Emperors and ancestors: the creation of an imperial image' carried out at the Radboud University Nijmegen (forthcoming).

¹⁴⁸ On coin circulation see for instance C. Howgego, "The circulation of silver coins, models of the Roman economy, and crisis in the third century A.D." in: C.E. King and D. Wigg eds., *Coin Finds and Coin Use in the Roman World* (Berlin, 1995), pp. 219–36; Howgego, "Coin circulation and the integration of the Roman economy"; C. Howgego, "The supply and use of money in the Roman world 200 B.C. to A.D. 300", *JRS* 82 (1992), pp. 1–31; Kemmers, *Coins for a Legion*; F. Kemmers, "Not at random", pp. 39–49.

Using coin types for an analysis of the development of third-century imperial representation

Since imperial coins spread imperial communications, were minted uninterruptedly, reached a large audience and can be interpreted more easily because of the presence of both text and images, they constitute an extremely important source for analyzing third-century imperial representation at an empire-wide level. Other sources that might provide information about third-century imperial self-presentation were disrupted by contemporary problems. Imperial portraits are scarce or incomplete, especially for the second half of the century. The same applies to epigraphic source material. Furthermore, in comparison with other periods, third-century emperors hardly engaged in any large building projects, which explains the scarcity of monumental architecture for this period. Thus, many third-century sources suffered from the problems present in the third century and are less suitable for an analysis of third-century imperial representation. This shows that, for this aim, coinage can be considered the source *par excellence*.¹⁴⁹

Concerning third-century imperial coinage, part IV and V of the *Roman Imperial Coinage* (RIC in the following) provide the best overview. Although the catalogue, based on coin hoards, is old and therefore not wholly up to date, it outlines the coin types minted during the third century. Unfortunately, no other catalogue, representative of coins produced in the imperial mints during the whole third century, exists.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹ See also Hedlund, “... achieved nothing worthy of memory”, p. 27.

¹⁵⁰ There are other catalogues of imperial coin types and lists of imperial coins minted during various parts of the third century published, see for instance R. Abdy, I. Leins and J. Williams eds., *Coin Hoards of Roman Britain XI* (London, 2002); E. Besly and R. Bland, *The Cunetio Treasure. Roman Coinage of the Third Century A.D.* (London, 1983); R. Bland and A. Burnett, *The Normanby Hoard and other Roman coin hoards* (London, 1988); T.V. Buttrey, “A hoard of sestertii from Bordeaux and the problem of bronze circulation in the third century A.D.”, *American Numismatic Society Museum Notes* 18 (1972), pp. 33–58; R.A.G. Carson, “The Hamâ hoard and the eastern mints of Valerian and Gallienus”, *Berytus* 17 (1968), pp. 123–142; S.K. Eddy, *The Minting of Antoniniani A.D. 238–249 and the Smyrna Hoard* (New York, 1967); S. Estiot et al., “Le trésor de Saint-Palaye (Yonne): 8864 antoniniens de Valérien à Carin”, in: M. Amandry ed., *Trésors Monétaires XIV. Sainte-Pallaye et Autres Trésors de Bourgogne* (Paris, 1993), pp. 39–124; S. Estiot, *Ripostiglio della Venèra. Nuovo Catalogo Illustrato II.1. Aureliano* (Rome, 1995); S. Estiot, *Ripostiglio della Venèra. Nuovo Catalogo Illustrato II.2. Tacito-Florian* (Verona, 1987); S. Estiot, *Catalogue des monnaies de l'Empire Romain 12.1 D'Aurélien à Florian (270–276 après J.-C.)* (Paris, 2004); J.-B. Giard, *Ripostiglio della Venèra. Nuovo Catalogo Illustrato I. Gordiano III-Quintillo* (Rome, 1995); F. Gnechchi, *I Medaglioni Romani I–III* (Milan, 1912); R. Göbl, *Die Münzprägung des Kaisers Aurelianus* (Vienna, 1993); R. Göbl, *Die Münzprägung der Kaiser Valerianus I., Gallienus,*

In which way can third-century coin types be deployed to map imperial representation in the turbulent third century? In my research on the representation of imperial power during the period 193–284, I analyzed the coin types mentioned in the *RIC* by assembling them in a database and dividing the types in so-called ‘categories of representation’. Although the coins’ obverse and reverse belong to the same coin and exhibit a reciprocal relationship, the messages on the obverse and on the reverse offer a different type of discourse and I chose to analyze only the reverses and not the obverses while examining the coin types of all emperors in the period 193–284.¹⁵¹ As mentioned above, the reverses are less static and more susceptible to changes than the obverses. Because of this variation, the messages on the types’ reverses are less subtle and therefore provide more distinct images of particular emperors and their reigns. Moreover, the reverses of imperial coins are somewhat underexposed in modern scholarship; coins’ obverses were more often (systematically) analyzed.¹⁵²

Obviously, the central Roman emperors were not the only authoritative persons who issued coins. In the period which this book covers, the Gallic Empire and the ‘vassal state’ Palmyra threatened the unity of the Roman Empire. Both the Gallic emperors and the Palmyrene rulers minted their

Saloninus (253/268), *Regalianus* (260) und *Macrianus, Quietus* (260/262) (Vienna, 2000); D. Gricourt, *Ripostiglio della Venèra. Nuovo Catalogo Illustrato IV. Caro-Diocleziano* (Rome, 2000); H.-M. von Kaenel et al., *Der Münzhort aus dem Gutshof in Neftenbach* (Zürich, 1993); J.P.C. Kent, *Roman Coins* (London, 1978); H. Mattingly, *BMCRE V. Pertinax to Elagabalus* (London, 1950); H. Mattingly and R.A.G. Carson, *BMCRE VI. Severus Alexander to Balbinus and Pupienus* (London, 1962); N.A. Mouchmov, *Le Trésor Numismatique de Reka-Devnia (Marcianopolis)* (Sofia, 1934); H.-G. Pflaum and P. Bastien, *La trouvaille de Çanakale (Turquie)* (Wetteren, 1969); K. Pink, “Der Aufbau der römischen Münzprägung in der Kaiserzeit I. Die Zeit des Septimius Severus”, *NZ* 66 (1933), pp. 17–54; K. Pink, “Der Aufbau der römischen Münzprägung in der Kaiserzeit, VI.1. Probus”, *NZ* 73 (1949), pp. 13–74; K. Pink, “Der Aufbau der römischen Münzprägung in der Kaiserzeit, VI.2, Carus und Söhne”, *NZ* 80 (1963), pp. 5–68. Obviously, for a more up-to-date and therefore more complete analysis, it would have had advantages to base the database that I created on a combination of the evidence provided by above-cited catalogues and lists. For constraints of time and space, however, the coin types used are those cited by *RIC*. It is, of course, possible to refine the database in later research.

¹⁵¹ Wallace-Hadrill, “Image and authority in the coinage of Augustus”, pp. 69–72. Vermeule also thinks that it is justified to analyze reverse types without considering the obverses: ‘Numismatists often think of Roman Imperial reverses as being as arbitrarily divided from reign to reign as the Emperor types on the obverses, but in many ways the reverses, the self-contained counterparts of the portrait side, can be studied in a continuity all their own’ (C.C. Vermeule, “Aspects of victoria on Roman coins, gems and in monumental art”, *NCirc* (1958), pp. 3–15; p. 3).

¹⁵² On an analysis of obverses in general, see for example King, “Roman portraiture: images of power?”. On an analysis of third-century obverses, see for instance Hedlund, “... achieved nothing worthy of memory”.

own coins, as did numerous other usurpers who challenged the power of many emperors in the third century. For purposes of this study, the comparability of the different variables is important. Therefore, only the coin types of rulers who reigned over a large geographical area are taken into consideration.¹⁵³ Moreover, when we look at the coinage of the Gallic emperors and compare it to the coins of their Roman pendants, we see that other patterns are active with respect to the messages on their coins.¹⁵⁴ Consequently, only the coins of the central Roman emperors are analyzed.¹⁵⁵

Regarding coins of other members of the imperial family than the emperor himself, the rhetoric displayed on coins of predestined successors, empresses or emperor's mothers is fundamentally different from the propaganda that is visible on coins of the Augusti. Emphasis on coins of female members of the imperial family lies on specific female virtues such as chastity and fertility as well as on goddesses, whereas the mean of the Caesares' coin types bearing the legend *princeps iuventutis* lies at 35.5%.¹⁵⁶ Apparently, monetary propaganda was tailored to the specific member of the imperial house, which hinders an analysis of the coin types of the imperial family as a whole and justifies the choice to focus solely on the coins of the emperor himself.¹⁵⁷

As to the categories of representation, they are certainly not randomly chosen. The categorization is based on the commonness of certain coin types within the ca. 8000 examples of third-century coin types that are assembled in the database. The difference between the specific coin types is in turn based on both the images and especially the legends present on them. In the following table an overview of the 13 categories

¹⁵³ On (problems concerning) the conceptualization of usurpation, the history of usurpations, usurpators and their coins, see for example E. Flaig, *Den Kaiser herausfordern. Die Usurpation im Römischen Reich* (Frankfurt and New York, 1992); F. Paschoud and J. Szidat eds., *Usurpationen in der Spätantike. Akten des Kolloquiums "Staatsstreich und Staatlichkeit" 6.–10. März 1996 Solothurn/Bern* (Stuttgart, 1997); Drinkwater, *The Gallic Empire*; G. Elmer, "Die Münzprägung der gallischen Kaiser in Köln, Trier und Mailand", *BjB* 146 (1941), pp. 1–10.

¹⁵⁴ Hekster and Manders, "Kaiser gegen Kaiser", pp. 141–142.

¹⁵⁵ Obviously, hybrid, irregular, barbarous and false types are omitted from consideration.

¹⁵⁶ Caracalla: 15.6%; Geta: 12.5%; Diadumenian: 67.9%; Severus Alexander: 11.1%; Maximus: 50%; Gordian III: 0%; Philippus II: 70%; Herennius Etruscus: 37.2%; Hostilian: 30.2%; Volusian: 38.5%; Valerian II: 38.5%; Saloninus: 44.1%; Carinus: 34.4%; Numerian: 46.4%.

¹⁵⁷ Since consecration coins and coins bearing another portrait next to the emperor's portrait do not display the usual symbol of the issuing authority, namely the exclusive portrait of the living emperor, the messages on the coins' reverse cannot be (solely) described to the Augustus. Therefore, they are not taken into consideration here.

Table 2 Representational categories

Dynastic representation	All forms of representation promoting the family of the emperor, his descent (of humans, <i>dei</i> and <i>divi</i>) and his (intended) successors
<i>Coin types with standard imperial titulature (often dated):</i>	1. Images of members of the imperial family/successors 2. Images of the emperor together with a member of the imperial family/successor/joint emperor(s)
<i>Coin types with a different legend (often undated):¹⁵⁸</i>	1. Names of members of the imperial family/successors 2. FECVNDITAS AVG¹⁵⁹ 3. NOBILITAS 4. PROPAGO IMPERI 5. PRINCEPS IVVENTVTIS 6. IVVENTA IMPERII 7. CONCORDIA FELIX (together with a depiction of Caracalla and Plautilla) 8. CONCORDIA AVGG 9. CONCORDIA AVG (together with a depiction of emperor and empress clasping hands) 10. DE PIA MATRE PIVS FILIVS 11. AVG PATRI AVG MATRI 12. SEVERI PII AVG FIL 13. IMP ET CAESAR AVG FILI COS 14. DIVI M PII F P M TR P III COS II P P 15. AVGVSTI COS

¹⁵⁸ Sometimes a dynastic component is added to the propagation of an imperial quality or feat by replacing AVG with AVGG. This phenomenon is mainly visible on coins of Augusti who ruled (temporarily) together with their son, father or another type of co-regent. Probably, the addition of AVGG shows that all of these emperors either tried to create a dynasty or simply continued the dynastic trend set in by their family members. Nevertheless, coin types with the addition AVGG in the legend are not divided into the category 'dynastic representation' only because of this addition. The division of these particular coin types into a specific category depends on the messages as a whole which the specific coin types disseminated.

¹⁵⁹ Concerning the rendering of coin types' legends, the following rules are applied in this study (including this table). When the legend of *one* coin type is rendered, abbreviations and cases are maintained. The same applies to a group of coin types all featuring the same abbreviations and cases in their legends. When, within a group of coin types, different abbreviations (e.g. VICT AET, VICT AETERN) are used for the same concept(s), I write out the concept(s) completely (VICTORIA AETERNA). When different cases of the same concepts (PAX, PACI) are employed within a group of coin types, I render the concept in the nominative (PAX). When, within a group of coin types, a specific number of types uses a particular abbreviation/case, while approximately the same number of types within this group employs another abbreviation/case, I mention both possibilities. In a few cases I deviate from these rules for the sake of clarity.

Table 2 (*cont.*)

Military representation	All forms of representation emphasizing the armed forces, military victories, and the role of the emperor as general
<i>Coin types with standard imperial titulature (often dated):</i>	1. Images of the emperor depicted in military dress or with military attributes/barbarians/enemies/captives/soldiers/standard bearers/Victoria 2. Images of Victoria 3. Images of Fides (Militum) with legionary standard(s) 4. Images of the emperor in triumphal quadriga 5. Images of a galley 6. Images of soldier(s) 7. Images of a trophy with captives 8. Images of captive(s) 9. Images of legionary eagle between standards
<i>Coin types with a different legend (often undated):</i>	1. VICTORIA 2. VICTORIA GERMANICA/PARTHICA (MAXIMA)/GOTHICA/BRITTANNICA/GALLICA/CARPICA 3. FIDES VICTOR 4. VNDIQVE VICTORES 5. VICT LEG 6. VICTOR IVST 7. INVICTVS 8. INVICTO IMP (TROPAEA) 9. Imperial military titulature (e.g. GERMANICVS MAXIMVS (TER/V), PART MAXIMVS, (PART) ARAB (PART) ADIAB) 10. FIDES EXERCITVS (or EXERCITI)¹⁶⁰/MILITVM/LEGIONVM/EQVITVM/PRAET 11. CONCORDIA MILITVM/EXERCITVS (or EXERCITI)/EQVIT/LEGIONVM 12. FELICITAS EXERCITI 13. PAX EXERCITI 14. SALVS MILITVM 15. COH(H)(ORT) PRAET (PRINCIPI SVO)/CHORS TERTIA PRAETORIA

The addition AVG/AVGG in the legend is only rendered in this table when this addition is decisive for the division of particular coin types into a specific category. However, since the coin types divided into the category 'unica' are exceptional types, the full legends are mentioned in this table.

¹⁶⁰ The genitive *exerciti* sometimes occurred instead of the more widely used genitive *exercitus*, see *TLL* V.2.1390.76.

Table 2 (*cont.*)

	16. EXERCITVS INLVRICVS (<i>sic</i>) 17. GENIVS EXERCITVS (ILLVRICIANI) 18. Legionary series Septimius Severus/Gallienus 19. GALLIENVS CVM EXER SVO 20. CONSERVATOR EXERC/MILITVM 21. PROFECTION 22. ADLOCVTIO 23. ADVENTVS 24. TRAIECTVS (together with depiction of soldiers)
Divine association	All forms of representation connecting the emperor and his reign with the gods/ the divine and displaying the emperor as <i>sacerdos</i>
<i>Coin types with standard imperial titulature (often dated):</i>	1. Images of gods 2. Images of (emperor with) religious attributes 3. Images of the emperor and/ or other members of the imperial family sacrificing 4. Images of temples
<i>Coin types with a different legend (often undated):</i>	1. VOTA VICENNALIA/DECENNALIA 2. VOTA (ORBIS/PVBLICA/SOLVTA/SVSCEPTA) 3. DONA 4. Names of deities 5. Images and/or names of deities together with COMES/CONSERVATOR/PACATOR ORBIS/RECTOR ORBIS/DI PATRII/DIS AVSPICIBVS/RELIGIO/epithets/nouns 6. INVICTVS (together with a picture of a deity) 7. PROVIDENTIA DEORVM 8. FELICIT DEORVM 9. DIS CVSTODIBVS/GENITORIBVS 10. SACERDOS VRBIS 11. INVICTVS SACERDOS/SACERDOS DEI SOLIS ELAGABALI/SVMMVS SACERDOS
<i>Saeculum aureum</i>	All forms of representation featuring the prosperity that the emperor will bring/has brought
<i>Coin types with standard imperial titulature (often dated)</i>	Images of personifications which do not refer to material matters (such as Annona, Moneta) but to abstract matters such as Pax, Fortuna, Fides, Salus, Felicitas, Abundantia, Spes, Securitas, Concordia, Laetitia, Libertas, Uberitas, Bonus Eventus.

Table 2 (*cont.*)

<i>Coin types with a different legend (often undated)</i>	1. TEMPORVM FELICITAS, SAECVLVM NOVVM, MILIARVM SAECVLVM, SAECVLI FELICITAS, LAETITIA TEMPORVM, SAECVLVM FRVGIFERVM, SECVRITAS SAECVLI, TELLVS STABIL, SECVRITAS ORBIS, SECVRIT IMPERII (<i>sic</i>), FELICITAS, SPES FELICITATIS ORBIS, SECVRITAS TEMPORVM. 2. Names of personifications that do not refer to material matters (such as ANNONA, MONETA) but to abstract matters such as PAX, FORTVNA, SALVS, FELICITAS, ABVNDANTIA, SPES, SECVRITAS, CONCORDIA, LAETITIA, LIBERTAS, VBERITAS, BONVS EVENTVS, FIDES, often together with additions such as PVBLICA/FVNDATA/FELIX/BONA. 3. PAX FVNDATA CVM PERSIS 4. OB CONSERVATIONEM PATRIAE 5. OB CONSERVATIONEM SALVTIS 6. OB LIBERTATEM RECAPTAM 7. OB REDDIT LIBERT 8. OB LIBERTATEM RECEPTAM 9. VBIQVE PAX 10. ORIENS 11. SAL GEN HVM 12. LIBERATIS CIVIBVS
<i>Euergesia</i> ¹⁶¹	All forms of representation promoting social-economical achievements accomplished by the emperor
<i>Coin types with standard imperial titulature (often dated):</i>	1. Images of Moneta 2. Images of Annona 3. Images of buildings (e.g. Coliseum, Thermae Alexandri, triumphal arch, Circus, bridge (without soldiers))

¹⁶¹ Since, in this research, the term *munificentia* is used to designate a virtue and is therefore linked to the representational category 'virtues', the term *euergesia* is deployed here to describe social-economic achievements.

Table 2 (*cont.*)

<i>Coin types with a different legend (often undated)</i>	1. MONETA 2. ANNONA 3. ARCVS 4. SAECVLARES 5. LVDI SAECVLARES 6. SACRA SAECVLARIA 7. PRIMI DECENNALES
<i>Paradeigmata</i>	All forms of representation reflecting attempts of the emperor to associate himself with great past emperors (Augustus, Trajan)
<i>Coin types with a different legend (often undated)</i>	Adoption of the name and/or titulature of the predecessor by the reigning emperor (SPQR OPTIMO PRINCIPI, DEO AVGVSTO)
<i>Restitutor-messages</i>	All forms of representation displaying the emperor as <i>restitutor</i> (not only in military matters but also with religious and economical matters)
<i>Coin types with a different legend (often undated)</i>	1. MON RESTITVTA/RESTITVTOR MONETAE 2. RESTITVTOR ORBIS 3. RESTITVTOR VRBIS 4. RESTITVTOR GENERIS HVMANI 5. RESTITVTOR ORIENTIS 6. RESTITVTOR GALLIARVM 7. RESTITVTOR SAECVLI 8. RESTITVTOR EXERCITI 9. RESTITVTORI GENTIS (<i>sic</i>) 10. RESTITVTOR ILLVRICI 11. RESTIT PIETATIS 12. RESTITVTOR SAECVLI 13. RESTITUTOR ILLVRICI
<i>Elevation</i>	All forms of representation placing the emperor or members of the imperial family beyond the human ranks
<i>Coin types with standard imperial titulature (often dated)</i>	1. Images of the emperor with divine attributes (<i>quadriga</i> (no triumphal <i>quadriga</i>), club) 2. Images of the emperor's Genius

Table 2 (*cont.*)

<i>Coin types with a different legend (often undated)</i>	1. RECTOR VRBIS 2. RECTOR ORBIS (in combination with image of the emperor) 3. FVNDATOR PACIS 4. PACATOR ORBIS (in combination with image of the emperor) 5. PACATOR ORIENTIS 6. MENTI LAVDANDAE 7. MATER CASTRORVM 8. MAT AVGG MAT SEN M PATR 9. FORTVNA REDVX 10. GENIVS AVG
Non-specific representation	All forms of representation in which the emperor (or someone else) assumes a 'neutral role' and fulfils no specific function
<i>Coin types with standard imperial titulature (often dated)</i>	1. Images of the emperor with 'neutral' attributes (e.g. scepter, globe, branch) 2. Image of a woman 3. Image of a wreath 4. Images of the emperor on horseback
Virtues	All forms of representation promoting the virtues of the emperor, the army, or the people (of Rome or of other regions)
<i>Coin types with standard imperial titulature (often dated)</i>	Images of personifications of Aequitas, Clementia, Indulgentia, Iustitia, Liberalitas, Munificentia, Patientia, Pietas, Providentia, Pudicitia, Virtus.
<i>Coin types with a different legend (often undated)</i>	1. (Images depicting personifications of) AEQVITAS, CLEMENTIA, INDVLGENTIA, IVSTITIA, LIBERALITAS, MVNIFICENTIA, PATIENTIA, PIETAS, PROVIDENTIA, PVDICITIA, VIRTVS. 2. CONSERVATOR PIETATIS 3. PIETAS MILITVM 4. PIET SAECVLI 5. CLEMENTIA TEMPORVM 6. VIRTVS MILITVM/EQVIT/EXERCITVS 7. VIRTVS ILLVRICI 8. INVICTA VIRTVS 9. AEQVITAS PVBICA 10. INDVLGENTIA AVGG IN CARTH 11. INDVLGENTIA AVGG IN ITALIAM 12. INDVLG FECVNDAE

Table 2 (*cont.*)

<i>Aeternitas</i> -messages	All forms of representation propagating eternal continuation of the reign of the emperor at that time, the existence of Rome, peace, hope, happiness, security, the invincibility of the emperor and the Roman Empire, deities, and of the concord within the imperial family
<i>Coin types with a different legend (often undated)</i>	1. AETERNITAS/PERPETVITAS 2. ROMA AETERNA 3. CONCORDIA AETERNA 4. VICTORIA AETERNA/PERPETVA 5. VICTORIOSO SEMPER 6. VESTA AETERNA 7. PAX AETERNA 8. SECVRITAS PERPETVA 9. FELICITAS AETERNA 10. SPEI PERPETVAE 11. POTESTAS PERPETV 12. AETERNITAS IMPERII
Geographical messages	All forms of representation referring to (personifications of) geographic entities such as the city of Rome and provinces
<i>Coin types with standard imperial titulature (often dated)</i>	1. Images of Rome 2. Images of Africa
<i>Coin types with a different legend (often undated)</i>	1. DACIA (FELIX) 2. PANNONIA 3. GENIVS ILLVRICI 4. ORIENS 5. SALVS ITAL 6. SISCIA 7. AFRICA 8. VRB[!?] ROMAE
Unica	All forms of representation that do not fit in the above categories and appear rarely on third-century coin types
<i>Coin types with standard imperial titulature (often dated)</i>	1. Image of Romulus with spear and trophy 2. Image of Felicitas with Palladium and scepter 3. Image of a (radiate) lion (with thunderbolt/bull's head between paws) 4. Image of elephant 5. Image of head of Medusa

Table 2 (*cont.*)

<i>Coin types with a different legend (often undated)</i>	1. IVCVNDITATI AVG (Image of Jucunditas)
	2. CONS PRINC AVG (Image of emperor crowning trophy)
	3. VABALATHVS VCRIMDR (Image of laureate and draped bust of Vaballathus)
	4. FIDES MVTVA AVGG (Image of clasped hands)
	5. PIETAS MVTVA AVGG (Image of clasped hands)
	6. GENIO SENATVS (Image of the Genius of the senate)
	7. FELICITAS REIPVBLICAE (Image of Felicitas)
	8. IVENTVS/IVVENTAS AVG (Image of Hercules)
	9. REGI ARTIS (Image of Vulcan)
	10. ALACRITATI (Image of Pegasus)
	11. IVBENTVS (LVBENTVS) AVG (Image of emperor with victory and spear)
	12. S P Q R (Image of lion with eagle on his back)
	13. HILARITAS (Image of Hilaritas)
	14. TRANQVILLITAS (Image of Tranquillitas)
	15. HVMANITAS (Image of Roma)
	16. ORIGINI AVG (Image of she-wolf suckling Romulus and Remus)
	17. AMOR MVTVVS AVGG (Image of clasped hands)
	18. CARITAS MVTVA AVGG (Image of clasped hands)
	19. PATRES SENATVS (Image of clasped hands)
	20. CONSERVATOR AVG (Image of one of the Dioscuri)
	21. QVINTO FELIX S C (Image of Pax)

of representation is given. This table provides not only definitions with regard to the various categories of representation, but it also shows which coin types are put in the specific categories. In other words, it lists the criteria on the basis of which the third-century coin types are divided into specific categories.¹⁶²

After dividing the coin types into categories, it is possible to distinguish the forms of imperial representation that were the most widespread and those that were rare on third-century coinage. By means of a quantitative

¹⁶² Naturally, some coin types can be placed into more than one category. Overlap occurs in the case of some coin types bearing a legend that consists of standard imperial titulature that fails to indicate how to interpret a complex image (for instance showing the emperor in military dress making a sacrifice), as well as in the case of coin types whose legend and image communicate contrasting messages.

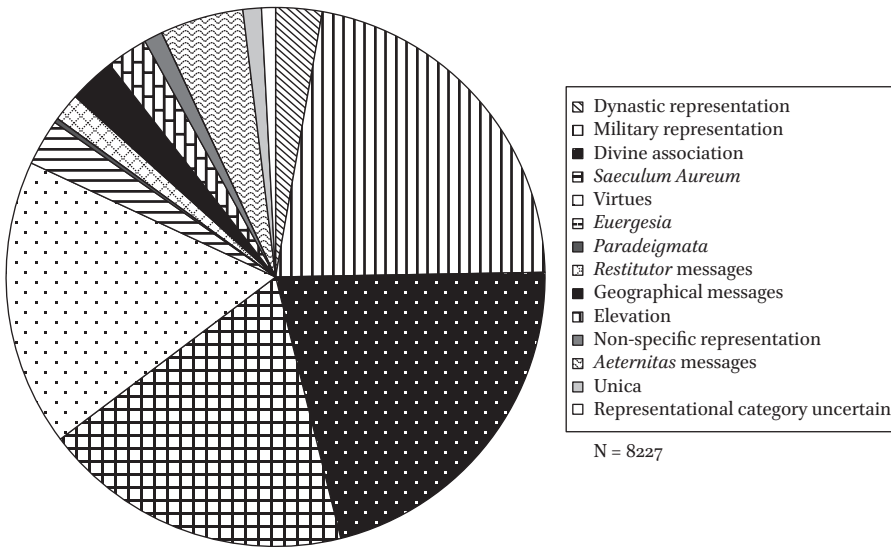


Figure 1 Proportions of coin types distributed over the representational categories for the period A.D. 193–284

analysis of the the coin types, it becomes clear that most coin types belong to the categories 'military representation', 'divine association', '*saeculum aureum*', and 'virtues' (see figure 1). Of all coin types, 22.5% have a military character, on 21.8% of them the emperor and his reign are associated with the divine, 19.2% promote *saeculum aureum* and 17.4% glorify virtues. 21.2% of all coin types fulfill the remaining categories.¹⁶³

Thus, in the turbulent third century emphasis was laid on military matters, which is not surprising for a period afflicted by many military problems. The frequent appearance of both associations of emperors and their reigns with the divine (in other words mainly with deities who could provide help in straitened circumstances) and of promises or promotions of a golden age can likewise be explained quite easily. The emphasis on third-century emperors' virtues shows that the rulers apparently had an interest in presenting themselves as the right men in the right place during a period in which the emperorship changed hands often. Of course,

¹⁶³ As discussed above, the total percentage of coin types in this graph is more than 100% (i.e. 102.1%) because 2.1% of the coin types fit more than one category. Concerning statistical methods applied to analyses of ancient coins, see C. Carcassone and T. Hackens eds., *Statistics and Numismatics. Statistique et Numismatique* (Strasbourg, 1981).

this does not imply that all exponents of these forms of representation should be reduced to actual third-century problems and that in other periods these forms were not as common as in the third century.¹⁶⁴

The development of these four large categories, 'divine association', 'military representation', '*saeculum aureum*' and 'virtues', will be treated extensively in the following four chapters. In these chapters, which discuss the development of third-century imperial representation at macro-level, more graphs are presented. Figure 2 demonstrates how the bar charts present in part one of this book are structured. They all present the development of a particular type of representation over the period 193–284. The separate columns in figure 2 render the percentages of coin types presenting a particular type of representation for each emperor, namely divine association.¹⁶⁵ These percentages correspond to the proportion of coin types representing divine association struck relative to the total number of coin types issued under successive emperors' reigns. In order to map diachronic developments, the percentages are put in chronological order. The names of the emperors, together with the total number of coin types issued during their reigns, are listed on the x-axis.¹⁶⁶

Some emperors, however, reigned only for a few weeks or months, whereas others reigned for more than ten years. Graphs such as figure 2 do not take into account the varying lengths of the third-century reigns. This methodological choice is based on the following arguments. First, I use percentages instead of absolute numbers; this renders the relative proportions of different types of representation of each emperor. Second, if my charts were to account for the lengths of third-century emperors' reigns, with the columns' widths adjusted to the lengths of the reigns, the percentages of emperors who reigned only for a short period of time would fade next to the percentages of emperors who reigned for a relatively long time span. Consequently, both short-lived changes and turning points in the development of particular types of representation at the hand of short-term emperors would be obscured.¹⁶⁷ Therefore, in the next chapters only graphs with columns of similar width, as represented by

¹⁶⁴ On imperial virtues communicated by means of coins in the period A.D. 69–235, see Noreña, "The communication of the emperor's virtues".

¹⁶⁵ See below, p. 100.

¹⁶⁶ Obviously, in some cases reigns overlap chronologically (e.g. Septimius Severus, Caracalla and Geta).

¹⁶⁷ See for instance Aemilian's reign which marks a moment of change in the representation of Jupiter and Hercules (see below, pp. 104 and 110) as well as Decius' deviating way of representing his power (see pp. 253–267).

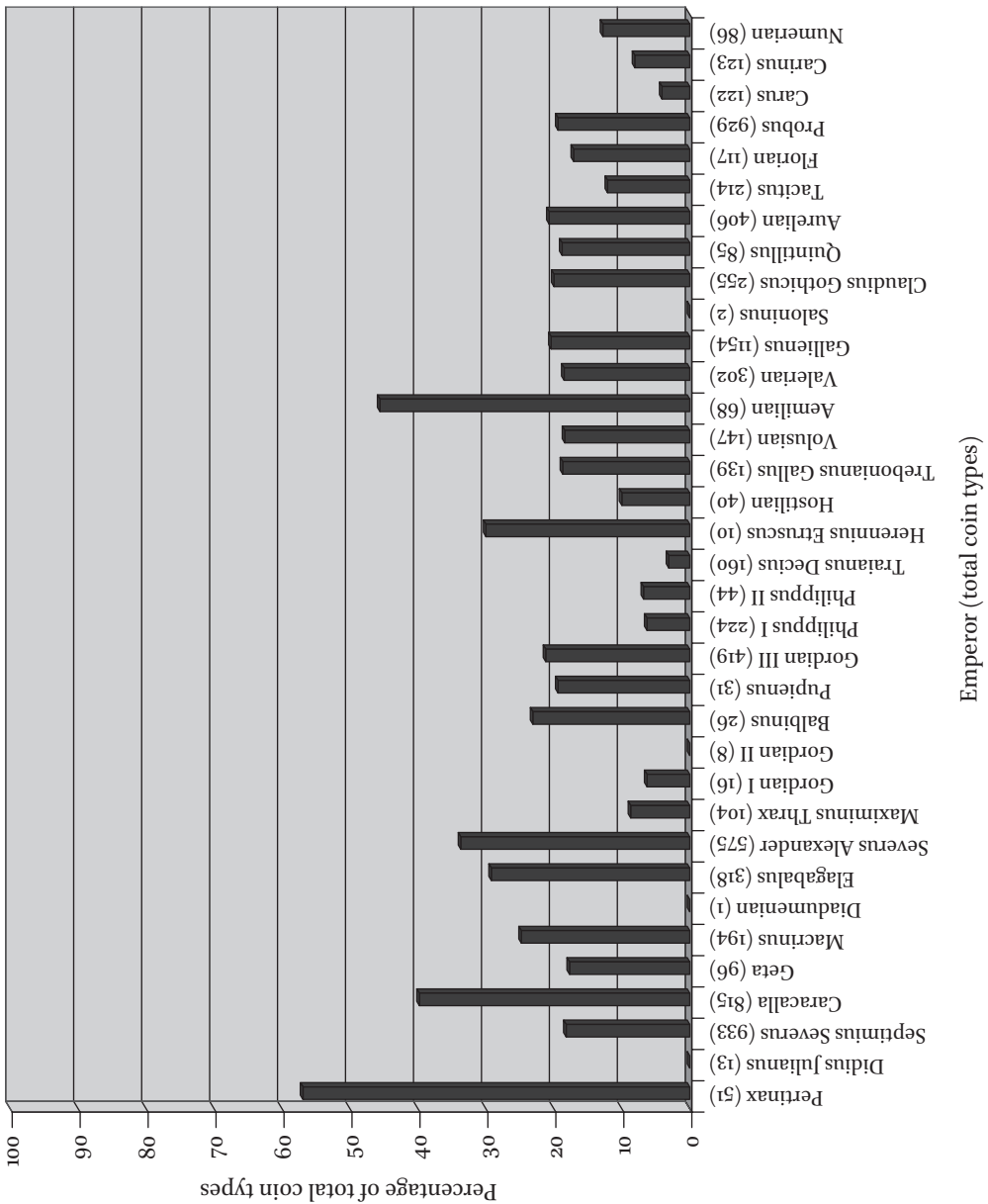


Figure 2 Proportions of coin types propagating 'divine association' per emperor

figure 2, are used. Furthermore, the total numbers of coin types issued by third-century emperors are also presented by noting the total number of coin types for every emperor on the x-axis.

However, we must take into account that the length of an emperor's reign could influence the messages that were propagated on coins issued during his emperorship. For instance, in a period characterized by military strife it could be important for new rulers to emphasize their military prowess first.¹⁶⁸ When the emperors were short-lived, they might not have had the opportunity to publicize other types of messages, whereas rulers who reigned for a longer period of time could easily have shifted their attention to other sorts of propaganda after they had emphasized their *virtus*. Then, ideological patterns could be the result of reigns' lengths.

Surely, both the division of coin types into categories and the graphs presented in this dissertation present a simplified rendering of the representation of third-century emperors on imperial coins. I think, however, that, striving for perfection, which means considering all possible nuances, obscures important developments, shifts and patterns in such a way that progress in (this field of) scholarship could hardly be made. A beautiful piece of writing, called 'On Exactitude in Science', composed by the Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges (1899–1986) illustrates this:

... In that Empire, the Art of Cartography attained such Perfection that the map of a single Province occupied the entirety of a City, and the map of the Empire, the entirety of a Province. In time, those Unconscionable Maps no longer satisfied, and the Cartographers Guilds struck a Map of the Empire whose size was that of the Empire, and which coincided point for point with it. The following Generations, who were not so fond of the Study of Cartography as their Forebears had been, saw that that vast Map was Useless, and not without some Pitilessness was it, that they delivered it up to the Inclemencies of Sun and Winters. In the Deserts of the West, still today, there are Tattered Ruins of that Map, inhabited by Animals and Beggars; in all the Land there is no other Relic of the Disciplines of Geography.¹⁶⁹

Yet, in order to avoid presenting a completely simplified picture, the dividing lines between the categories of representation are not always upheld strictly in the following chapters. This means for instance that, within the chapter that deals with the form of representation labeled 'divine association', the discussion of the representation of Jupiter includes *all* coin types that refer to Jupiter and not only coin types that are assigned to the category 'divine association'. Thus, the analysis of third-century coin types

¹⁶⁸ Hekster and Manders, "Kaiser gegen Kaiser", p. 139.

¹⁶⁹ J.L. Borges, *Collected Fictions* (translated by A. Hurley, 1998), p. 325.

sometimes blurs the division into the categories of representation since ancient coins present not wholly unambiguous messages.

The representativeness of coin types

Another methodological issue has to be discussed, namely a problem inherent in examining coin types.¹⁷⁰ The analyses presented in this book are based on coin *types* and not on actual numbers of coins. How reliable is an analysis based on types?

The repeated introduction of new coin types during the course of the Roman Empire shows the importance of types and, therefore, the relevance of an analysis of imperial representation based on coin types. Furthermore, some correlation between coin types and actual coin numbers can be demonstrated. This correlation can be revealed by testing particular representation themes against actual numbers of coins. To analyze this, I took the category 'divine association' as example. Thus, the number of coin types promoting divine association in general, issued during a particular reign, is compared with the actual numbers of coins of a particular emperor propagating divine association within representative hoards.¹⁷¹ 'Representative hoards' in this case designates hoards that were found in varying parts of the Empire and that contain large numbers of coins issued during the third century. Furthermore, because third-century hoards consisting of gold and bronze coins are scarce, I used silver hoards exclusively. The majority of these silver hoards contain only *antoniniani* (Normanby, Neftenbach, Venera, Çanakkale), though one hoard contains both *denarii* and *antoniniani* (Cunetio) and another consists only of *denarii* (Reka-Devnia).¹⁷² Two graphs result from this comparison. The first one (figure 3) shows the percentages of *denarii* attributed to particular emperors that promote divine association within the Reka-Devnia and Cunetio

¹⁷⁰ Regarding differentiation between coin types, the choices that are made by the editors of the *RIC* are maintained here. In addition, when different variants of a type are mentioned separately (by means of a), b) *et cetera*, these variants are counted as separate types.

¹⁷¹ The percentages represent, respectively, the total number of coin types issued during a particular reign as they are listed in the *RIC*, and the total number of coins of a specific emperor found in a particular hoard.

¹⁷² Normanby: Bland and Burnett, *The Normanby Hoard and other Roman coin hoards*. Neftenbach: Von Kaenel et al., *Der Münzhort aus dem Gutshof in Neftenbach*. Venera: Giard, *Ripostiglio della Venèra. Nuovo Catalogo Illustrato I. Gordiano III-Quintillo*; Estiot, *Ripostiglio della Venèra. Nuovo Catalogo Illustrato II.1. Aureliano*; Estiot, *Ripostiglio della Venèra II.2. Nuovo Catalogo Illustrato. Tacito-Floriano*; Gricourt, *Ripostiglio della Venèra. Nuovo Catalogo Illustrato IV. Caro-Diocleziano*. Çanakkale: Pflaum and Bastien, *La trouvaille de Çanakkale (Turquie)*. Cunetio: Besly and Bland, *The Cunetio Treasure*. Reka-Devnia: Mouchmov, *Le Trésor Numismatique de Reka-Devnia (Marcianopolis)*.

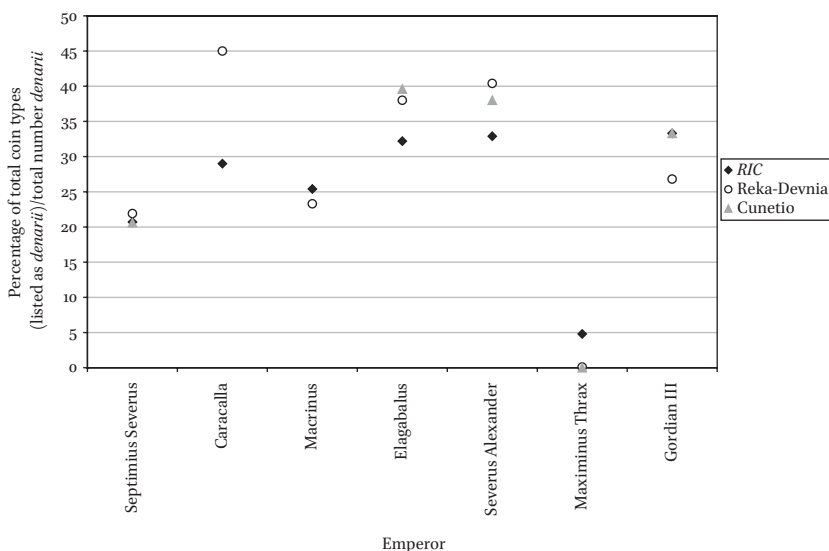


Figure 3 Proportions of coin types (*denarii* listed in *RIC*) propagating 'divine association' per emperor opposed to proportions of coin numbers (*denarii* found in Reka-Devnia and Cunetio hoards) propagating 'divine association' per emperor

hoards, set against the percentages of coin types (issued during specific rules), listed in the *RIC* only or amongst other things as *denarii*, communicating divine messages.¹⁷³

In figure 4, the percentages of *antoniniani* (issued during other reigns than the ones in figure 3) promoting divine association within the Normanby, Cunetio, Venera, Neftenbach, and Çanakkale hoards are compared with the percentages of coin types (issued during particular reigns), listed in the *RIC* alone or amongst other things as *antoniniani*, propagating divine association.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷³ Geta (no coins found in Cunetio hoard), Gordian I and II (no coins found in both hoards), Pupienus (no coins found in both hoards), and Balbinus (no coins found in Cunetio hoard) are excluded here. The percentages represent, respectively, the total number of *denarii* of a specific emperor found in a particular hoard, and the total number of coin types, as they are listed in the *RIC*, issued during a particular reign and issued alone or amongst other things as *denarii*.

¹⁷⁴ Philippus II, Herennius Etruscus, Hostilian, and Saloninus are excluded here. The percentages represent, respectively, the total number of *antoniniani* of a specific emperor found in a particular hoard, and the total number of coin types, as they are listed in the *RIC*, issued during a particular reign and issued alone or amongst other things as *antoniniani*.

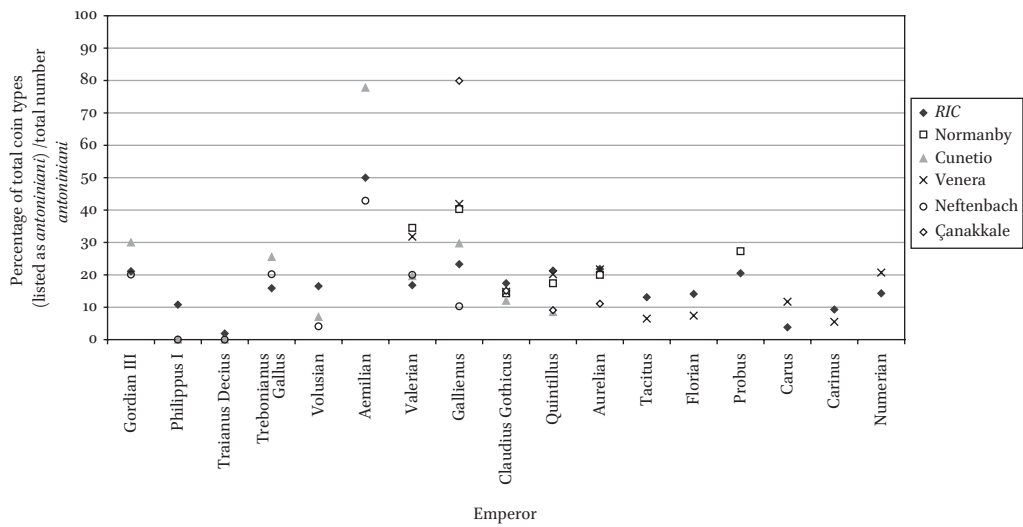


Figure 4 Proportions of coin types (*antoniniani* listed in *RIC*) propagating 'divine association' per emperor opposed to proportions of coin numbers (*antoniniani* found in Normanby, Cunetio, Venera, Neftenbach and Çanakkale hoards) propagating 'divine association' per emperor

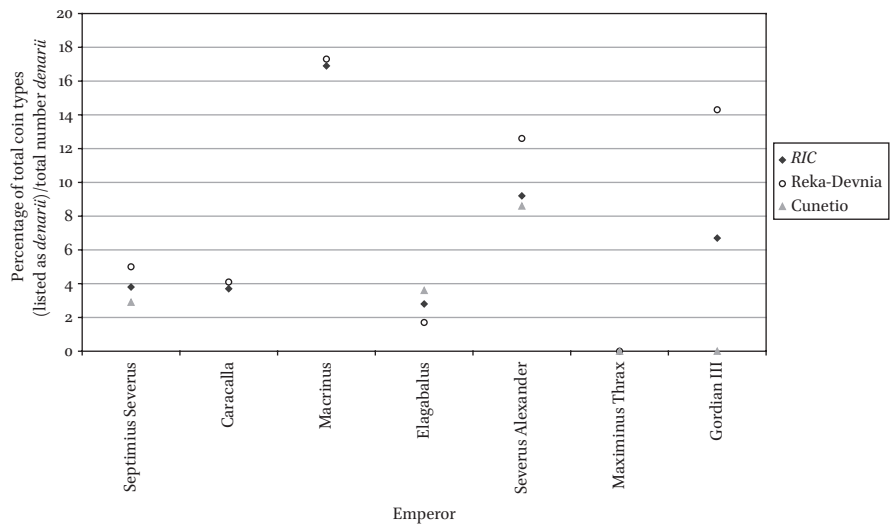


Figure 5 Proportions of coin types (*denarii* listed in *RIC*) representing Jupiter per emperor opposed to proportions of coin numbers (*denarii* found in Reka-Devnia and Cunetio hoards) representing Jupiter per emperor

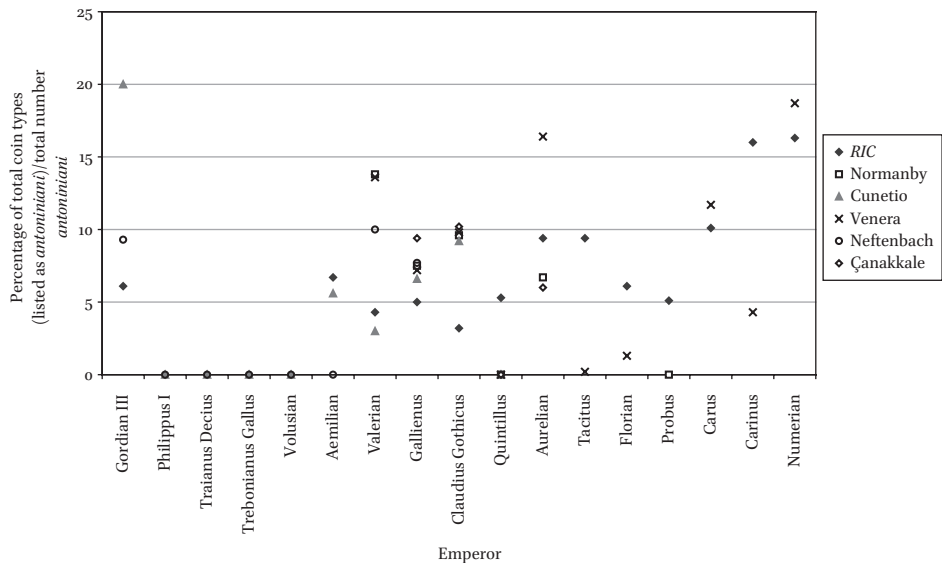


Figure 6 Proportions of coin types (*antoniniani* listed in *RIC*) representing Jupiter per emperor opposed to proportions of coin numbers (*antoniniani* found in Normanby, Cunetio, Venera, Neftenbach and Çanakkale hoards) representing Jupiter per emperor

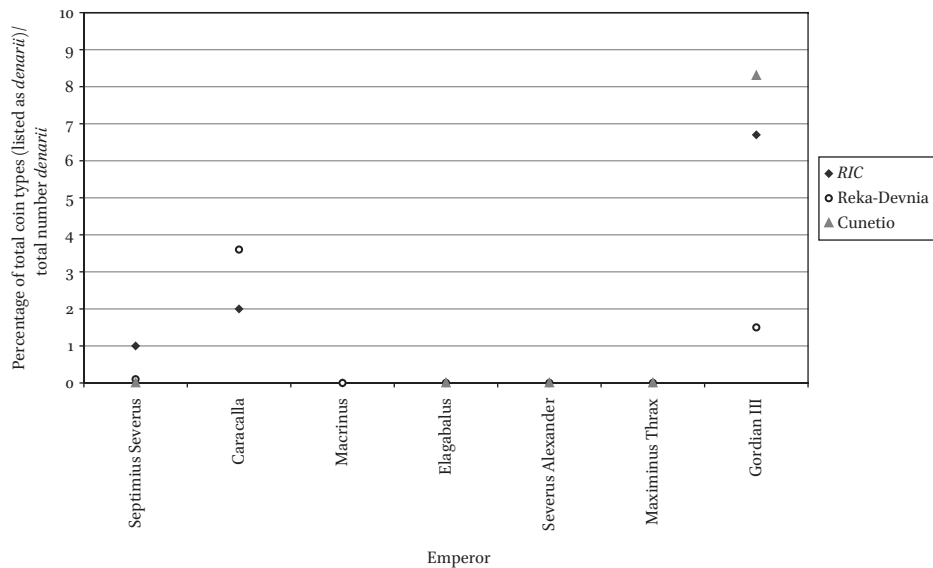


Figure 7 Proportions of coin types (*denarii* listed in *RIC*) representing Hercules per emperor opposed to proportions of coin numbers (*denarii* found in Reka-Devnia and Cunetio hoards) representing Hercules per emperor

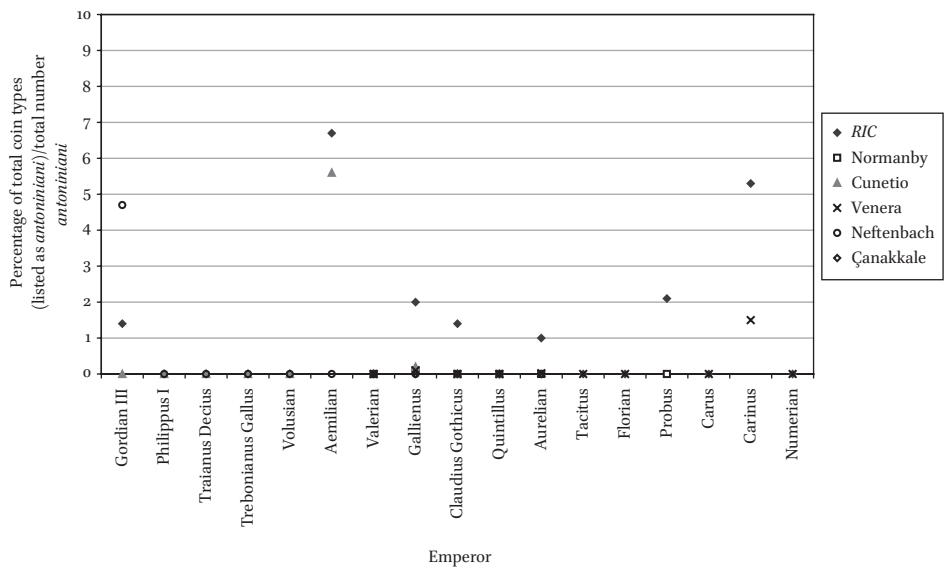


Figure 8 Proportions of coin types (*antoniniani* listed in *RIC*) representing Hercules per emperor opposed to proportions of coin numbers (*antoniniani* found in Normanby, Cunetio, Venera, Neftenbach and Çanakkale hoards) representing Hercules per emperor

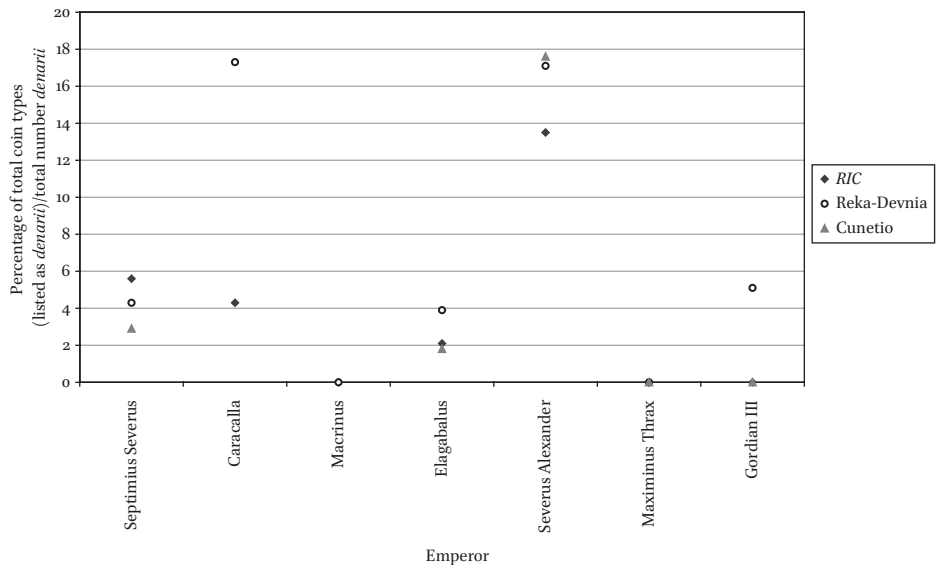


Figure 9 Proportions of coin types (*denarii* listed in *RIC*) representing Mars per emperor opposed to proportions of coin numbers (*denarii* found in Reka-Devnia and Cunetio hoards) representing Mars per emperor

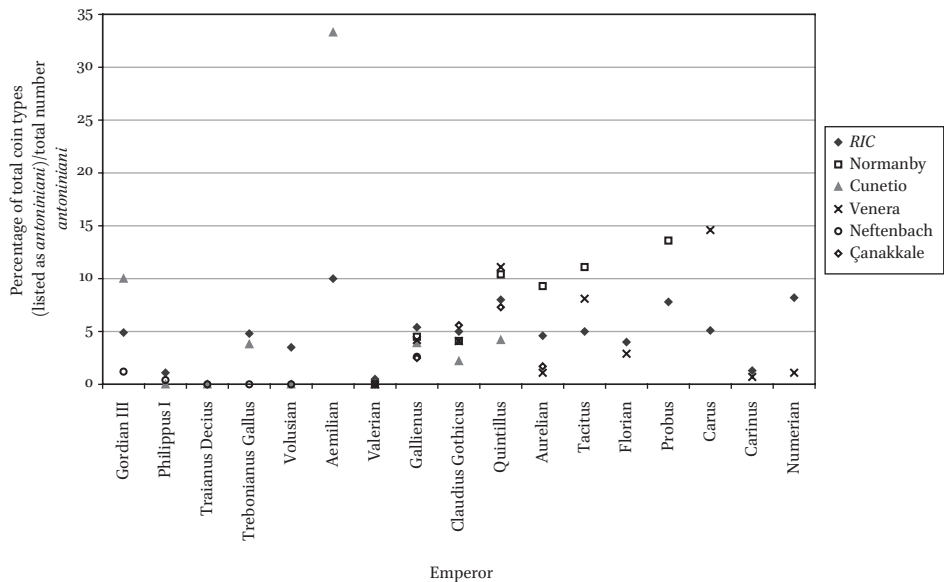


Figure 10 Proportions of coin types (*antoniniani* listed in *RIC*) representing Mars per emperor opposed to proportions of coin numbers (*antoniniani* found in Normanby, Cunetio, Venera, Neftenbach and Çanakkale hoards) representing Mars per emperor

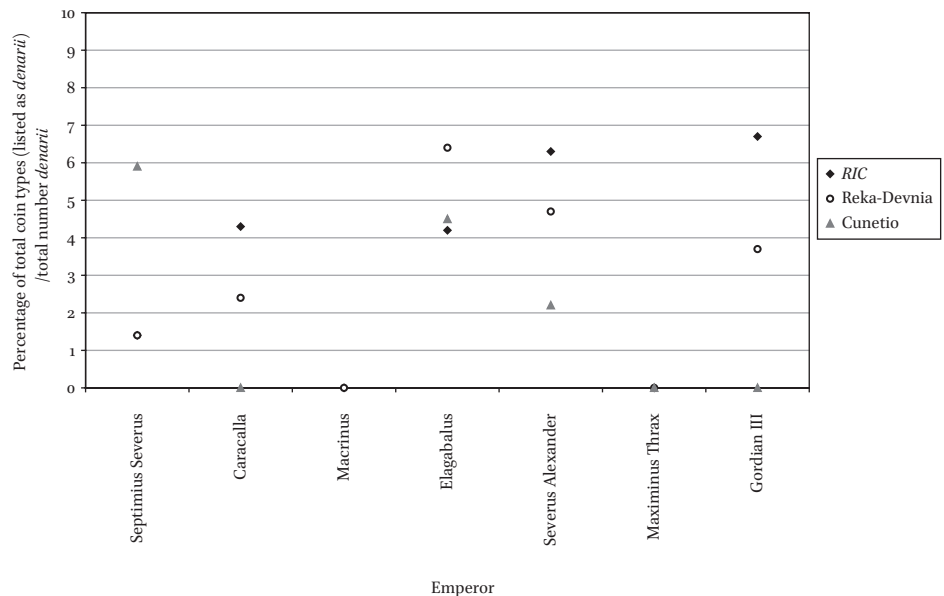


Figure 11 Proportions of coin types (*denarii* listed in *RIC*) representing Sol per emperor opposed to proportions of coin numbers (*denarii* found in Reka-Devnia and Cunetio hoards) representing Sol per emperor

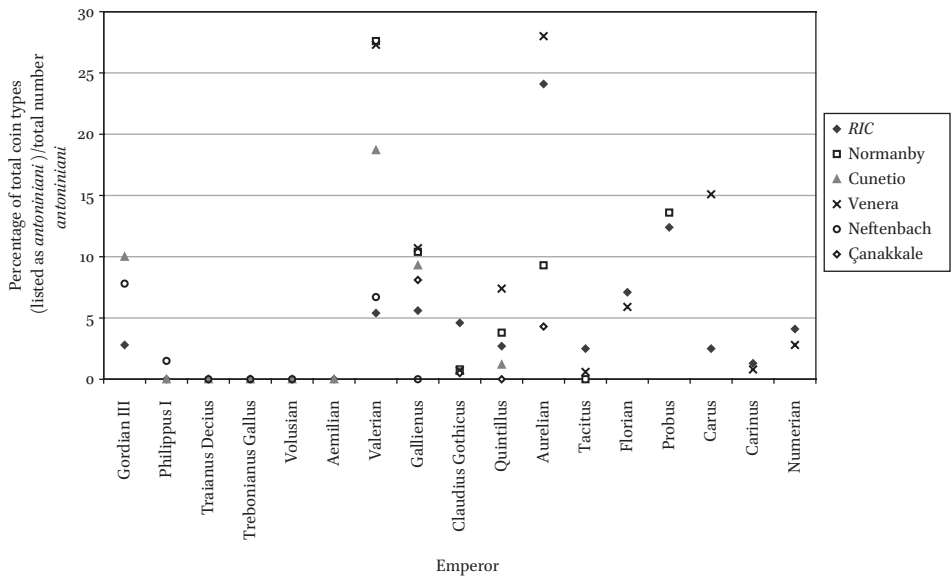


Figure 12 Proportions of coin types (*antoniniani* listed in *RIC*) representing Sol per emperor opposed to proportions of coin numbers (*antoniniani* found in Normanby, Cunetio, Venera, Neftenbach and Çanakkale hoards) representing Sol per emperor

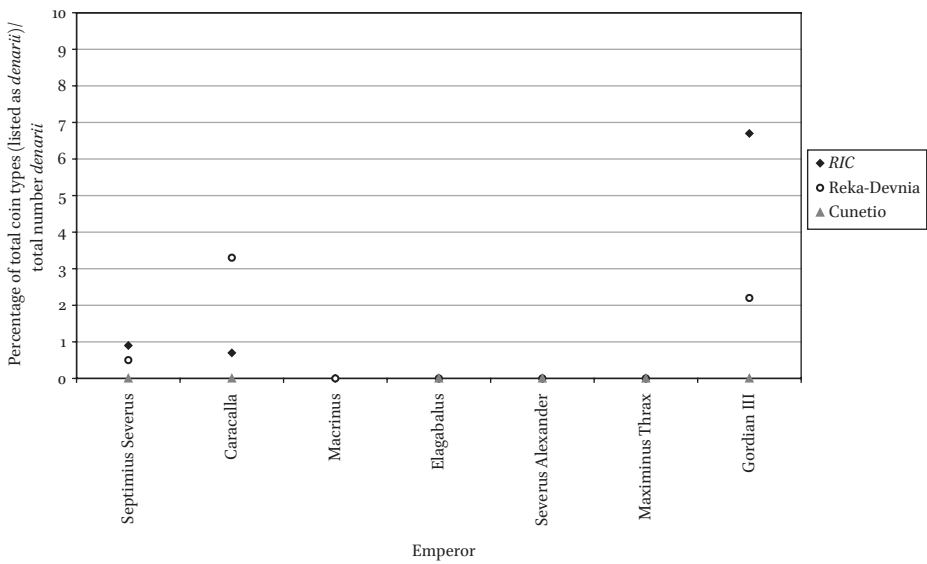


Figure 13 Proportions of coin types (*denarii* listed in *RIC*) representing Apollo per emperor opposed to proportions of coin numbers (*denarii* found in Reka-Devnia and Cunetio hoards) representing Apollo per emperor

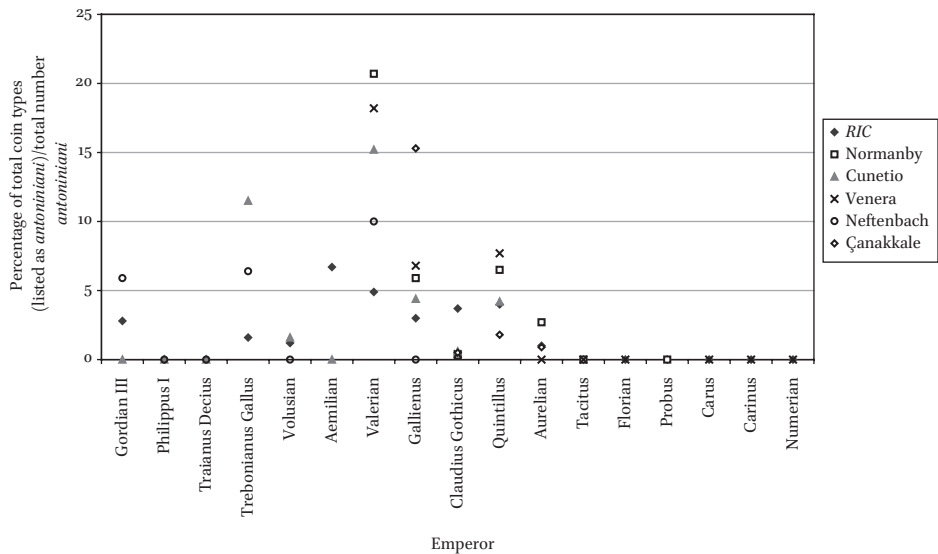


Figure 14 Proportions of coin types (*antoniniani* listed in *RIC*) representing Apollo per emperor opposed to proportions of coin numbers (*antoniniani* found in Normanby, Cunetio, Venera, Neftenbach and Çanakkale hoards) representing Apollo per emperor

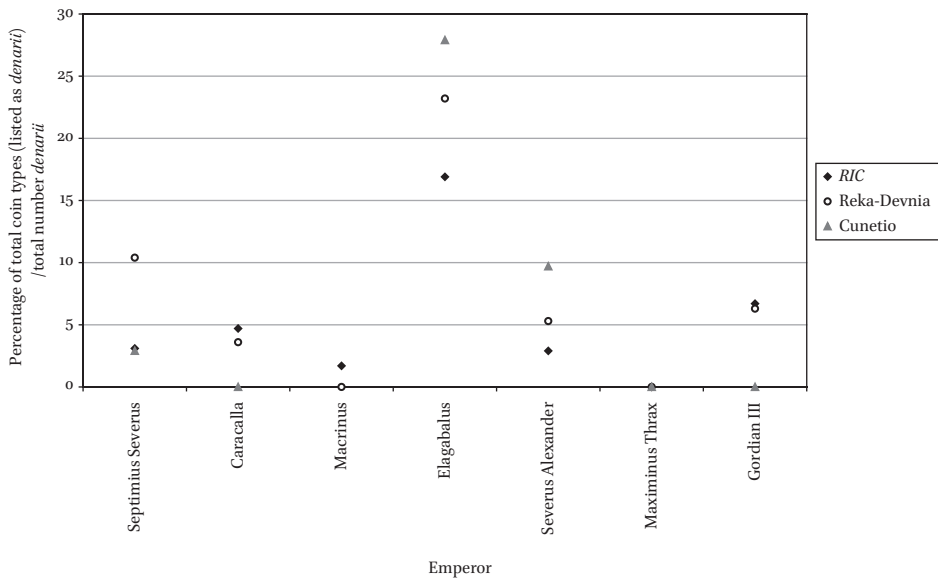


Figure 15 Proportions of coin types (*denarii* listed in *RIC*) representing the emperor as *sacerdos* per emperor opposed to proportions of coin numbers (*denarii* found in Reka-Devnia and Cunetio hoards) representing the emperor as *sacerdos* per emperor

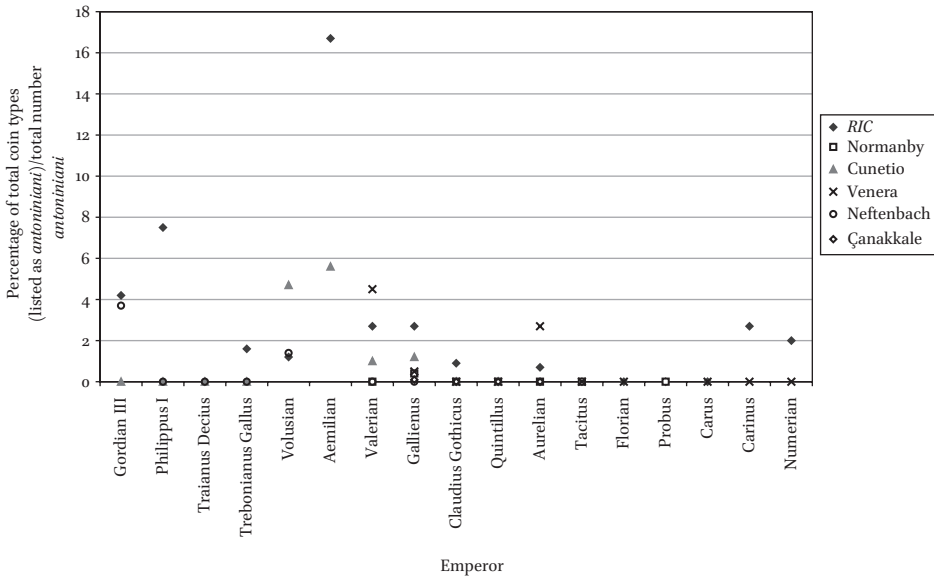


Figure 16 Proportions of coin types (*antoniniani* listed in *RIC*) representing the emperor as *sacerdos* per emperor opposed to proportions of coin numbers (*antoniniani* found in Normanby, Cunetio, Venera, Neftenbach and Çanakkale hoards) representing the emperor as *sacerdos* per emperor

It is clear that, for most reigns, the percentages of *RIC* and the hoards do not wholly correspond with each other. When looking at the overall development of divine association in general, however, one sees similar fluctuations in the percentages of coin types listed in the *RIC* and in the number of coins stemming from the hoards.

Apart from divine association in general, the percentages of silver coin types referring to particular deities (Jupiter, Hercules, Mars, Sol, Apollo) and to the emperor as *sacerdos* are compared with the percentages of *denarii* and *antoniniani* displaying the same references but stemming from coin hoards.¹⁷⁵

Concerning these comparisons between coin numbers and coin types by means of deities and the emperor as *sacerdos*, the same can be concluded as in the case of divine association in general; similar fluctuations emerge

¹⁷⁵ The representation both of these gods and of the emperor as *sacerdos* will be treated extensively in chapter three. The reasons underlying their prominent position in this study will also be mentioned in that particular chapter (see below, pp. 97–98).

in the overall diachronic progression of references to particular deities and the emperor as *sacerdos* on both coin types and coins stemming from different hoards. As I argue, this conformity strongly suggests that coin types can be used in research on the representation of imperial power in the third century.¹⁷⁶ Thus, an analysis of the number of coin types indicates properly which kind of messages were emphasized and which messages were certainly not widely propagated during particular periods in Roman history.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁶ Some of the results presented in this research are based on relatively small numbers of coin types. Although it is statistically problematic to draw harsh conclusions on the basis of these small numbers, it is possible to draw at least some conclusions, since every coin type symbolizes several coins.

¹⁷⁷ For a quantification of coin types, see also Noreña, "The communication of the emperor's virtues".

CHAPTER TWO

APPEASING THE ARMY

Be harmonious, enrich the soldiers, and scorn all other men.¹

Septimius Severus' last words, directed at his two sons, illustrate the armed forces' political importance as the principate progressed. Defense and new conquests on the frontiers could only happen through armies faithful to the Roman center of power. Furthermore, vital for the political (and physical) survival of the emperor, together with other forms of (legal) support, was the soldiers' acceptance of his claim to power.² In many cases, the rapid succession of emperors in the third century shows what could happen when the soldiers preferred another candidate for the purple; the legions' support or rejection of a particular ruler often decided who held imperial power. Thus, for the maintenance of the Empire as well as for the safety of the emperor himself, it was important to ensure the troops' support. The centrality of the armed forces and, more specifically, the connection between the emperor and his troops were therefore propagated by means of various media. In the first place, the Empire's urban and artistic landscape could serve as a vehicle of such communications; triumphal arches, temples (such as the temple to Mars the Avenger which was built *ex manubiis*) and imperial *fora*, for instance, emphasized the relation between the emperor and his troops. Second, titulature, acclamations and ceremonies, all directly linked to the emperor, could reflect the armies' importance. Finally, easily transferable media, such as coins and literature, were used for this purpose.³

The boundaries between these categories are certainly not fixed. For example, imperial titulature can be found in literary works as well as on coinage. Yet, out of all the media mentioned, coins penetrated the widest within the Empire and the messages spread by this medium thus reached the most inhabitants.⁴ A considerable part of the receivers of these

¹ Cass. Dio 77.15.2: "ὁμονοεῖτε, τοὺς στρατιώτας πλουτίζετε, τῶν ἄλλων πάντων καταφρονεῖτε".

² See J.B. Campbell, *The Emperor and the Roman Army* (Oxford, 1984), p. 146 and pp. 374–382.

³ Hekster, "The Roman army and propaganda", pp. 341–351.

⁴ See above, p. 30.

messages consisted of soldiers, since the armed forces were undoubtedly the largest section of the Roman population that used coinage. After all, the soldiers were paid with coins for their services. Opinions vary widely, however, as to which kind of money was used to pay the armies. Nevertheless, it seems that, from the reign of Septimius Severus onward, gold and silver coinage formed the most important means with which the military was paid.⁵

Not only was a large part of the imperial coinage received and used by the soldiers, in the third century approximately one fifth (22,5%) of imperial coin types propagates the centrality of the military (see figure 1). Whether these military messages were also directed at soldiers forms a topic of discussion. Through a comparison between the messages on Flavian coins found at the *canabae legionis* in Nijmegen (The Netherlands) and the messages on coins stemming from the same period but from other military sites Kemmers, however, shows convincingly that coinage could target soldiers; the coins display geographically differentiated images of military themes.⁶

We can divide the military themes put forward on third-century imperial coinage into three categories. First, some coins refer to the military role(s) of the emperor; the emperor could be presented either in the role of superior military commander or in the role of *commilito* or both. Second, other types emphasize victory in general or specific victories. Third, there are types that bear direct references to the armed forces, by which references to the troops in general or to particular military units are meant. Before discussing these three categories of military themes in more detail, attention will be paid to the diachronic development of the depiction of military themes in general on third-century coinage. During which reigns are peaks and low points visible? And can fluctuations in third-century military representation on imperial coinage offer us more information on the course of third-century wars?

⁵ Hekster, "Coins and messages", p. 28. For discussion about money used to pay the soldiers see *ibid.*, p. 28 with n. 34. For money used to pay the soldiers in the Julio-Claudian period, see Kemmers, *Coins for a legion*, pp. 193–194.

⁶ See also above, pp. 36–37. Kemmers, "Not at random" and Kemmers, *Coins for a legion*, pp. 248–256. Kemmers demonstrates, moreover, that money was sent when the troops needed it. See also Hekster, "The Roman army and propaganda", p. 14; Hekster and Manders, "Kaiser gegen Kaiser", p. 36.

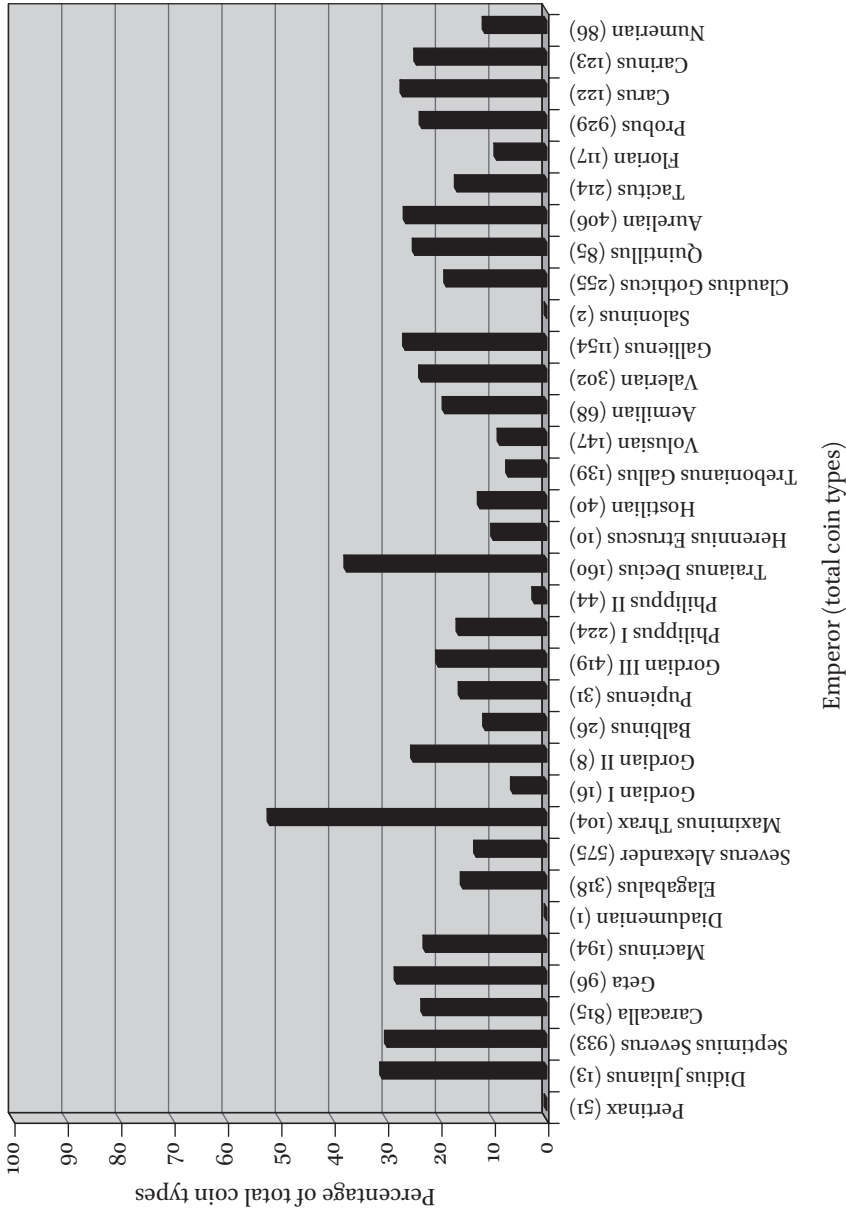


Figure 17 Proportions of coin types propagating 'military representation' per emperor

1. THE GENERAL PICTURE

As figure 17 makes clear, military messages on coins were widely disseminated throughout the third century. Only the coins of Pertinax, Diadumenian and Saloninus bear no representations of military themes. The small number of coin types produced during the short period when Diadumenian and Saloninus were Augusti may explain their lack of militaristic coins.⁷ However, this explanation fails in the case of Pertinax.⁸ Although, similar to Diadumenian and Saloninus, Pertinax did not occupy the imperial throne for long, the number of coin types struck during his rule was substantial.⁹ Explanations for the lack of military coin types during Pertinax' rule, then, might be this short-lived emperor's avoidance of military campaigns and his possible distaste for military prominence in state affairs.¹⁰ The possibility that Pertinax, perhaps for the legitimization of his rule, preferred types promoting divine association or proclaiming *pax* above militarily tinged messages could have played an additional role.¹¹

Concerning the general diachronic development of military representation, from Pertinax' reign until and up to Severus Alexander's reign a slight decline is visible in the number of military coin types. However, no large fluctuations emerge in this period. In contrast, from the rule of Maximinus Thrax onward, percentages fluctuate to a greater extent, most heavily in the period 235–253. From Aemilian's rule onward, the differences between the numbers of military coin types issued during various emperors' reigns diminish somewhat. The mean percentage of third-century military representation lies at 18.3%. Peaks are visible under Maximinus Thrax and Decius, whereas low points occur for Gordian I, Philippus II, Herennius Etruscus, Trebonianus Gallus, Volusian, and Florian.¹²

The peak appearing during the reign of Maximinus Thrax seems easy to explain, since Maximinus fought almost continuously during the four years of his reign: 'for no sooner had he gained power, than he began his military

⁷ Total coin types for Diadumenian: 1. Total coin types for Saloninus: 2.

⁸ See also the absence of *virtus* on Pertinax' coins, p. 169.

⁹ On the relation between short-lived emperors, their coin output and the messages on their coins, see below, pp. 99–101.

¹⁰ An analysis of second-century imperial coin types might also demonstrate that Pertinax used the same imagery as his second-century predecessors.

¹¹ *Pax* types were also dominant under Commodus' reign, see *RIC* III, pp. 366–444.

¹² Maximinus Thrax: 51.9%; Decius: 37.5%; Gordian I: 6.3%; Philippus II: 2.3%; Herennius Etruscus: 10%; Trebonianus Gallus: 7.2%; Volusian: 8.8%; Florian: 9.4%.

campaign'.¹³ It is not very surprising, then, that coin types displaying military themes were minted in large quantities during the period 235–238: 51.9% of the total number of coin types minted during Maximinus' reign are military types. However, Maximinus Thrax might have had another reason for putting military themes on his coins to a large extent. By means of exploiting his military status he probably wanted to emphasize the fact that he was an equestrian with much military experience (and thus to safeguard the support of his soldiers) while contrasting the poor military capacities of his predecessor, Severus Alexander, sharply with his own.¹⁴ He appeared 'to have been more comfortable on the battlefield' and he even sent pictures of himself fighting his enemies to Rome for public display.¹⁵ Be this as it may, in view of the military activities during Maximinus' reign it is self-evident that military themes were predominant on his coinage.

As did Maximinus Thrax during his reign, Decius fought extensively in the period A.D. 249–251.¹⁶ This was necessary because of the unstable situation at the lower Danube, caused by the Goths. The coins presenting military themes were struck in all two years of Decius' reign and may thus reflect these military campaigns. Aurelius Victor portrays Decius as being vigorous in combat.¹⁷ However, according to Potter, 'his conduct on campaign in the next two years was as inept as any in the long annals of Roman military history'.¹⁸ All the same, Decius seems to have attached great importance to propagating military messages.¹⁹ Along with the large number of coin types exhibiting military themes, Decius' assumption of

¹³ Herodian 7.1.6: ... ἅμα γὰρ τῷ τὴν ἀρχὴν παραλαβεῖν εὐθέως πολυμικῶν ἔργων ἥρξατο ... See further H.A. The Two Maximini 10.3: 'For Maximinus had begun waging all manner of wars – and very valiantly, too – as soon as he had been made emperor, inasmuch as he was skilled in the art of war and wished, on the one hand, to guard the reputation he had already won, and, on the other, to surpass in everyone's eyes the glory of Alexander, whom he had slain' (*nam omnia bella coeperat agere, et quidem fortissime, statim ut factus est imperator, peritus utpote rei militaris, volens existimationem de se habitam tenere et ante omnes Alexandri gloriam, quem ipse occiderat, vincerat*). The most intensive war that he waged was against the Germans, see H.A. The Two Maximini 11.7–12.11; Herodian 7.2.1–9.

¹⁴ On the poor military capacities of Severus Alexander, see Campbell, *The Emperor and the Roman Army*, p. 385.

¹⁵ Comfortable on the battlefield: Potter, *The Roman Empire at Bay*, p. 168. Pictures for public display: Herodian 7.2.8 (ἄλλα καὶ γραφῆναι κελεύσας μεγίσταις εἰκόσιν ἀνέθηκε πρὸ τοῦ βουλευτηρίου).

¹⁶ On the military activities during both reigns, see pp. 83–84 n. 93.

¹⁷ Aurelius Victor, *De Caesaribus* 29 (*cum impigre decertaret*).

¹⁸ Potter, *The Roman Empire at Bay*, p. 244. On Decius' incompetency see also D.S. Potter, *Prophecy and History in the Crisis of the Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1990), p. 260 and p. 282.

¹⁹ See below, pp. 255–257.

the name Trajan might hint at this. After all, Decius could have intended to incorporate the name of Trajan, the victorious *optimus princeps*, into his titulature as a display of his own military *virtus*.²⁰ Because the name already appears on Decius' coinage from 250 onward, and thus early in his reign, association with Trajan might have served to legitimize Decius' assumption of power in a militaristic way. In addition to reflecting reality, legitimization of Decius' power could thus also have motivated the military messages on his coins. Moreover, the content of his numismatic military references indicates that a large proportion of these messages aimed to associate particular legions (for example *exercitus Illuriciani*) with the emperor or to advertise their support or both.²¹

As to Maximinus Thrax and Decius, although other factors might have been influential too, it is hard to conceive that the large number of coin types displaying military themes had no correlation with the large number of military campaigns conducted during their reigns.²² Furthermore, as we have already seen while discussing Pertinax' military representation, the lack of military representation on his coinage and the absence of military campaigns during his reign might be related. However, it is difficult to pin down whether numismatic military representation and actual military activities did dovetail for other third-century reigns. First, it is only possible to check this relationship by means of a representative sample of coin types; emperors under whose reign, for instance, only ten types were struck are certainly not eligible. Second, as the third century progresses it becomes increasingly difficult to date coin types accurately. This results in an impossibility of linking any military campaign to coin types. Third, from the second half of the third century onward, military activities were a matter of course. After the 250s, and even before, almost every emperor

²⁰ Potter, *The Roman Empire at Bay*, p. 241. Potter cites the *Thirteenth Sibylline Oracle*, which introduced Decius as follows: 'After him another king will rule mighty flourishing Rome, skilled in war, emerging from the Dacians, of the number 300' (*Oracula Sibyllina* 13.81–83: Δακῶν ἐξαναδύς, τριηκοσίων ἀριθμοῖο). The number 300 refers to the Greek letter tau (first letter of Traianos) whereas the reference to the Dacians can be reduced to the author's association of the name Trajan with the Dacians. According to Potter, the author 'seems to have read the appearance of the name Trajan as Decius intended, as a reference to his military capacity'. See also Potter, *Prophecy and History*, p. 259. See further Rives, 'The decree of Decius and the religion of Empire', p. 142 and below, p. 259.

²¹ See below, pp. 256–257.

²² Both Maximinus Thrax and Decius were born in a part of the Empire (modern Balkans) from which many soldiers were recruited in the third century. Perhaps, the emperors' relationships with 'the most military part of the Empire' could also be associated with Maximinus Thrax' and Decius' peaks in military representation.

had to deal with internal and external troubles. Without large fluctuations in the number of military campaigns we can almost never identify coin types reacting to or anticipating actual military events. Yet, greater stability in the percentages of military coin types from Aemilian's reign onward could reflect reactions to actual military events, taking place almost non-stop during these years. The diminishing fluctuations, however, could also imply that, after Aemilian, emperors simply imitated their predecessors' attention paid to military themes on coinage to a certain extent. The military coin types struck in this period might not therefore all refer to specific campaigns or wars.

2. THE EMPEROR'S MILITARY ROLES

The civil war had created two new elements in the state machinery which could not be disregarded and discarded in a work of pure restoration, since they were the chief moving forces in that machinery. These elements were the now permanent army and its commander-in-chief the Emperor Augustus, *Imperator Caesar divi filius Augustus*.²³

The armed forces and the emperor worked interdependently. From 193 onward, the emperor often owed his position to the armies – the emperor was *a militibus electus, a senatu appellatus Augustus*²⁴ – and the troops could not operate coherently on their own without any official orders (i.e. without a commander whom they accepted as their supreme leader).²⁵ There were several ways in which the emperor and armies could unify. One way was the presentation of the emperor as a military man, another his presentation as *imperator*. That the emperor was indeed the military leader *par excellence* is obvious; from Augustus onwards the armies fought solely for him. Moreover, all victories that were gained by the legionary commanders were attributed to the emperor and therefore his to celebrate.²⁶ According to Campbell, 'the problem for each emperor was to

²³ M. Rostovtzeff, *The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire* 1, 2nd edition (Oxford, 1957), p. 38.

²⁴ A. Alföldi, *Die monarchische Repräsentation im römischen Kaiserreiche* (Darmstadt, 1970), p. 164.

²⁵ See above, p. 20. Naturally, it could and did happen that the troops operated without orders imposed by the authorities or that (particular units of) the army did not obey these orders. It is however clear that in these cases rebellions (or military misconduct) are meant.

²⁶ This was laid down in the 'constitutional' settlements of 28/27 B.C., 23 B.C. and 19 B.C. See O. Hekster, "Fighting for Rome: the emperor as a military leader", in: L. de Blois and

combine the role of an impressive *imperator* (...) with a close association with the ordinary soldiers.²⁷ The ancient sources portray these two military roles of the emperor, the emperor as 'ordinary' military man and the emperor as commander.

Ancient authors tell us that emperors behaved as 'fellow-soldiers'. Caracalla forms probably the best example of this kind of behavior:

(...), he would march with the soldiers and run with them, neither bathing nor changing his clothing, but helping them in every task and choosing exactly the same food as they had; and he would often send to the enemy's leaders and challenge them to single combat.²⁸

Furthermore, emperors whose reputations differed from Caracalla's tried to equate their own high imperial authority with their common soldiers' by calling them *commilitones*.²⁹ In this way, the rulers wanted to create a bond of loyalty between them and their soldiers.³⁰

On the other hand, images of the emperor leading the armed forces during military campaigns, addressing the troops (*adlocutio*), arriving festively in Rome or another city after a military expedition (*adventus*), and departing for war (*profectio*) emphasized the superior position of the emperor as military commander, as did the emperor's image on the *signa* and the *dona militaria*.³¹ The imagery that propagated the emperor as *imperator* was deployed to develop strong ties between the soldiers and their successful leader. Moreover, it demonstrated the competence of the *princeps* to the Empire's inhabitants.

Naturally, in some cases it seems difficult to decide whether the emperor is depicted as 'fellow-soldier' or as *imperator*. For instance, some images on imperial coins or reliefs show the emperor either only in military dress or holding a military attribute, or both. Iconographic notions (e.g. size of the figure) make clear that it is the emperor who is portrayed on the

E. Lo Cascio eds., *The Impact of the Roman Army (200 BC–AD 476): Economic, Social, Political, Religious and Cultural Aspects*. IMEM 6 (Leiden and Boston, 2007), pp. 91–105; p. 92 (with further references).

²⁷ Campbell, *The Emperor and the Roman Army*, p. 18.

²⁸ Cass. Dio 78.13.1: ...καὶ γὰρ συνεβάδιζε τοῖς στρατιώταις καὶ συνέτρεχε, μὴ λουτρῶ χρώμενος, μὴ τὴν ἐσθῆτα ἀλλάσσω, ἀλλ' ἅλα καὶ πᾶν ἔργου συνεργαζόμενος καὶ πᾶσαν τροφὴν τὴν αὐτὴν ἐκείνοις αἰρούμενος· καὶ πολλάκις καὶ πρὸς τοὺς προέχοντας τῶν πολεμίων πέμπων προεκαλεῖτο αὐτοὺς ἐς μονομαχίαν...

²⁹ For the literary sources in which this phenomenon is discussed see Campbell, *The Emperor and the Roman Army*, pp. 32–59.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 58.

³¹ Hekster, "Fighting for Rome", p. 92.

coin.³² Yet, legends and other indications that would clarify the emperor's military role are lacking. The public, then, might have interpreted these images in the way they preferred; perhaps the Romans saw their emperor as victorious *imperator* or the soldiers considered him a *commilito*. It is possible that the emperor played deliberately with both interpretations to appeal to different layers of the Roman people. However, this conclusion is perhaps too speculative. According to Campbell, the military dress of the emperor remained 'the traditional garb of the Roman *imperator*, with all its martial associations'.³³ It is thus more than plausible that the majority of third-century imperial coins on which the emperor initially seemed to play an ambiguous military role simply presented the emperor as military leader.³⁴

On other third-century imperial coin types (all belonging to the category military representation), the role of the emperor as *imperator* can be discerned without difficulties. Coin types promoting *adventus*, *profectio* and *adlocutio* show the superior military position of the emperor (*image 1*). A small number of coin types display the same images as the types which show legends consisting of *adventus* or *profectio*. Yet, no legends clarify the depictions on these types. They might refer to *adventus* or *profectio*, but, because of the absence of legends propagating these messages, this is by no means certain. Therefore, they will be left out of consideration here; only types whose legends prove that they represent the emperor as military leader will be discussed.

Ceremonially speaking, the emperor's entry (*adventus*) into and departure (*profectio*) from Rome or the provinces cannot be separated. They were connected to each other by means of a sacrifice; before the *profectio*, a solemn promise was made to sacrifice to the gods after the emperor's return.³⁵ The *adventus* and *profectio* involved large celebrations which

³² Sometimes images of the emperor in military dress and/or with military attributes were part of a broader message (for example a coin type presenting the image of an emperor in military dress but showing the legend RESTITVTOR VRBIS, see *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 41). Although these types have military connotations, they do not always belong to the category 'military representation'.

³³ Campbell, *The Emperor and the Roman Army*, p. 57.

³⁴ These types were struck under almost every third-century emperor.

³⁵ T. Hölscher, *Victoria Romana, Archäologische Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Wesenart der römische Siegesgöttin von den Anfängen bis zum Ende des 3. Jhs. n. Chr.* (Mainz, 1967), pp. 48–49. On the connection between *adventus* and *profectio*, see Suetonius, *Augustus* 53.2. On the sacrifices and vows inherent to *profectio*, see J. Lehen, 'Profectio



Image 1 *Adventus* (RIC IV.3, Trajan Decius, no. 11b)

were reported in the literary sources and on coins.³⁶ Both types of ceremony enabled the emperor to present himself in two ways to his subjects, both as the accessible ruler and as the chief general.³⁷ An important part of both *profectio* and *adventus* was the *mutatio vestis*, the emperor's change of clothes which symbolized the transition between civil and military realm and between the emperor as first civilian and first general.³⁸ Concerning the *adventus*, there were several methods of transportation by which the emperor's entry could be represented on coinage; the emperor could arrive on foot, in a *quadriga*, on a horse or in a galley.³⁹ In the third century, 15 emperors propagated their arrivals on coins.⁴⁰ Thirteen

Augusti. Zum kaiserlichen Zeremoniell des Abmarsches", *Gymnasium* 108 (2001), pp. 15–33; pp. 18–20.

³⁶ On imperial *adventus* in late antiquity, see S.G. MacCormack, *Art and Ceremony in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1981), pp. 17–89.

³⁷ Lehen seems to consider only the *profectio* a ceremony which offered the emperor the possibility to present these two aspects of emperorship to his subjects (Lehen, "Profectio Augusti", p. 27). The same goes, obviously, for the *adventus* ceremony.

³⁸ Lehen, "Profectio Augusti", pp. 24–25; J. Lehen, *Adventus principis: Untersuchungen zu Sinngehalt und Zeremoniell der Kaiserankunft in den Städten des Imperium Romanum* (Frankfurt am Main, 1997), p. 48. See also J. Rüpke, *Domus Militiae: die religiöse Konstruktion des Krieges in Rom* (Stuttgart, 1990), pp. 135–136.

³⁹ Hölscher, *Victoria Romana*, pp. 51–58.

⁴⁰ RIC IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 73, 74, 177a)–178b), 248, 249, 330, 718, 719, 731; RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 56–58, 120, 121, 212; RIC IV.1, Geta, nos. 84, 182; RIC IV.2, Macrinus, no. 99; RIC IV.2, Elagabalus, nos. 57, 58, 184, 299, 340–342; RIC IV.3, Philippus I, nos. 26a), 26b), 81, 165; RIC IV.3, Trajan Decius, nos. 14, 15, 79; RIC IV.3, Trebonianus Gallus, nos. 14, 15, 79; RIC IV.3, Volusianus, nos. 214, 224a)–224c); RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 260; RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 22, 158, 463, 551, 552; RIC V.1, Claudius Gothicus, no. 13; RIC V.1, Aurelianus, nos. 8, 9, 42, 43; RIC V.2, Probus, nos. 2, 19, 20, 63, 64, 133, 154–167, 261, 582–584, 624–636, 836, 837, 890, 903, 904; RIC V.2, Carinus, nos. 294, 317; RIC V.2, Numerianus, no. 462. During

rulers are depicted sitting on the back of a horse on the majority of their *adventus* types. In addition, a galley is depicted on some of Septimius Severus' and Caracalla's types, while Gallienus appears without a horse or any other means of transport on two of his *adventus* coins.⁴¹ The latter is also true for one of Carinus' *adventus* types.⁴² Under Carinus' and Numerian's reign a new *adventus* type emerges which was directly linked to their co-rule. This type shows the emperors facing each other with Victoria between them on a globe crowning the rulers.⁴³ It symbolizes a division of power in the harmony after victory.⁴⁴

The majority of the third-century *adventus* coin types propagate its military messages clearly by means of military attributes (such as a spear) carried by the emperor, captives, enemies, and/or Victoria. Hölscher points out that from the reign of Septimius Severus onward the emperors often carried spears at their *adventus*.⁴⁵ Sometimes the spear was replaced by a scepter, especially in the second half of the third century.⁴⁶ In general, however, it is possible to discern the main elements of *adventus* types as formulated by Koeppel, which consisted of a galloping horse and the emperor in military dress raising his right hand, on third-century coinage. This 'scheme' remains recognizable even when other elements, such as the ones described above (e.g. Victoria, soldiers), appear.⁴⁷

Florian's reign two types showing the legend REDITVS AVG were struck (*RIC* V.1, Florianus, nos. 90 and 91). These types propagate the emperor's *adventus* too (see Hölscher, *Victoria Romana*, p. 51). *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 56–57 probably refer to the long journey in the East that Septimius Severus and his family made in 201–202, see P. Dufraigne, *Adventus Augusti, Adventus Christi: recherche sur l'exploitation idéologique et littéraire d'un cérémonial dans l'antiquité tardive* (Paris, 1994), p. 73.

⁴¹ *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 178a) and 178b); *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 57, 58, 120, and 121. *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 22 and *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 260.

⁴² *RIC* V.2, Carinus, no. 294.

⁴³ *RIC* V.2, Carinus, no. 317 and *RIC* V.2, Numerianus, no. 462.

⁴⁴ Dufraigne, *Adventus Augusti, Adventus Christi*, p. 72.

⁴⁵ Hölscher, *Victoria Romana*, p. 57.

⁴⁶ On spear and scepter as imperial attributes in the third century, see C. Grandvallet, "Haste ou sceptre long? La difficile identification d'un attribut de l'empereur combattant en numismatique (235–268 après J.-C.)", in: M.-H. Quet ed., *La "crise" de l'Empire romain de Marc Aurèle à Constantin. Mutations, continuités, ruptures* (Paris, 2006), pp. 133–148. This scepter could have been Maxentius' scepter, discovered in 2006 at the Palatine Hill in Rome, which was probably already in use in the third century. The scepter was in exhibition ('I segno del potere. Realtà e immaginario della sovranità nella Roma imperiale') at the Museo Nazionale Romano di Palazzo Massimo alle Terme. On spear and scepter as badges of power, see A. Alföldi, "Hasta – Summa Imperii: the spear as embodiment of sovereignty in Rome", *AJA* 63.1 (1959), pp. 1–27.

⁴⁷ G. Koeppel, *Profectio und Adventus* (Kevelaer, 1969), p. 183.

Whereas *adventus* coin types were distributed consistently throughout the third century, the *profectio* types were restricted to the reigns of three members of the Severan dynasty: Septimius Severus, Caracalla, and Severus Alexander.⁴⁸ It is notable that more emperors issued *adventus* types than struck *profectio* types. After all, wars were waged almost continuously during the third century, but successful military campaigns, celebrated during the emperor's *adventus*, became scarce. Hölscher offers a threefold explanation for this peculiar phenomenon.⁴⁹ First, the *adventus* of the emperor became an epiphany of the god-emperor in the third century and therefore overshadowed the *profectio*: 'Der "Auszug des Gottes" ist kein religiöses Motiv und kein Grund zur Verherrlichung'.⁵⁰ Hölscher is, however, somewhat unclear about the reasons why the *adventus* became an epiphany in the third century and not earlier or later in Roman imperial history. This might have something to do with the emperor's frequent absence from Rome in the third century; his absence from the capital could have made the emperor more susceptible to sacralization.⁵¹ Second, the emperor's departure was celebrated with an eye toward a safe return to his residence. However, in the third century the emperor often travelled from one battle to another and rarely visited Rome. Third, the majority of the third-century emperors owed their positions to the armies in the provinces. At the moment when the emperor arrived in Rome and he was recognized by the Senate, he had taken over supreme power officially. For these soldier emperors the *adventus* in Rome was therefore of considerable importance and, according to Dufraigne, it resembled a real accession to the throne in this respect.⁵²

Hölscher's threefold explanation for the low number of *profectio* types and the large number of *adventus* types in the third century remains con-

⁴⁸ *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 91, 106, 138, 165a)–165c), 494, 728, 740A, 746, 752; *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 107, 108, 225, 226, 431–433, 438–440, 445, 446, 449a), 449b); *RIC* IV.2, Severus Alexander, nos. 210, 524, 595, 596, 639–641.

⁴⁹ Hölscher, *Victoria Romana*, pp. 61–62.

⁵⁰ Hölscher, *Victoria Romana*, p. 61. On the *adventus* as epiphany, see also S. Benoist, *Rome, le Prince et la Cité* (Paris, 2005), pp. 79–91. On the divine character of *adventus* in the late third and fourth century as well as the influence of Christianity on the *adventus* ceremony, see S. McCormack, "Change and continuity in Late Antiquity: the ceremony of *adventus*", *Historia* 21.4 (1972), pp. 721–52. Dufraigne argues that, at the time of the soldier emperors in the third century, the *adventus* became 'comme une forme réduite du triomphe', see Dufraigne, *Adventus Augusti, Adventus Christi*, p. 61.

⁵¹ See further below, p. 143 with n. 221. On the influence of the increasing imperial sacralization in the third century on the *adventus* ceremony, see Benoist, *Rome*, pp. 79–91.

⁵² Aurelius Victor, *De Caesaribus* 37. Dufraigne, *Adventus Augusti, Adventus Christi*, p. 67.

vincing. The interaction between the changing status of the emperor, the decreasing importance of Rome as imperial residence and the heavy influence of the provincial armies on imperial power might all have contributed to the neglect of *profectio* scenes on coins after Severus Alexander.⁵³ One additional remark can be made: it is also possible that the propagation of *adventus* could refer to an entry in Rome *and* in other provincial cities, while *profectio* types were only used in the case of a departure from the headquarters of imperial power (i.e. the city of Rome).⁵⁴ After all, Hadrian issued coin types bearing legends such as ADVENTVI AVG AFRICAE / GALLIAE / HISPANIAE and ADVENTVI AVG ALEXANDRIAE.⁵⁵ Obviously, in this situation, *adventus* would have occurred more frequently than *profectio*.

Seven of Caracalla's *profectio* types (out of 14) display aggressive imagery; these types show either a captive, or Caracalla hurling javelins at foes, or the emperor trampling enemies with his horse.⁵⁶ This imagery reflects the aim of the imperial *profectio*, namely defeating Rome's enemies. Caracalla's alleged identification with his soldiers might also explain the somewhat harsh character of these types. In addition, four of Severus Alexander's *profectio* types (out of seven) show Victoria. This personification may have reflected reality, which implies a military victory, or expectation of a successful outcome after the *profectio*.⁵⁷ All *profectio* types of Septimius Severus and the remaining ones of Caracalla and Severus Alexander also communicate the military goal behind a *profectio*; they show

⁵³ See pp. 143–145.

⁵⁴ Especially from the middle of the third century onward, provincial cities were the emperors' point of departure, see Lehnert, "Profectio Augusti", p. 30.

⁵⁵ ADVENTVI AVG AFRICAE: *BMCRE* III, nos. 786, 1628–1633. ADVENTVI AVG GALLIAE: *BMCRE* III, nos. 1641–1644. ADVENTVI AVG HISPANIAE: *BMCRE* III, nos. 787, 1645–1648, 1648*. ADVENTVI AVG ALEXANDRIAE: *BMCRE* III, nos. 786*, 786†, 1634, 1634*. Other *adventus* types of Hadrian: ADVENTVI AVG ITALIAE: *BMCRE* III, nos. 788–792, 1649–1654; ADVENTVI AVG ARABIA: *BMCRE* III, nos. 1635–1637, 1637†; ADVENTVI AVG ASIAE: *BMCRE* III, no. 1638; ADVENTVI AVG BITHYNIAE: *BMCRE* III, nos. 1639, 1640; ADVENTVI AVG BRITTANNIAE: *BMCRE* III, no. 1640*; ADVENTVI AVG CILICIAE: *BMCRE* III, no. 1640†; ADVENTVI AVG IVDAEAE: *BMCRE* III, nos. 1655–1661; ADVENTVI AVG MACEDONIAE: *BMCRE* III, nos. 1661*, 1662, 1663; ADVENTVI AVG MAVRETANIAE: *BMCRE* III, nos. 1664–1669; ADVENTVI AVG MOESIAE: *BMCRE* III, no. 1669*; ADVENTVI AVG NORICI: *BMCRE* III, no. 1669*; ADVENTVI AVG PHRYGIAE: *BMCRE* III, no. 1669‡; ADVENTVI AVG SICILIAE: *BMCRE* III, no. 1670; ADVENTVI AVG THRACIAE: *BMCRE* III, no. 1671. See further Hölscher, *Victoria Romana*, pp. 54–55 n. 321.

⁵⁶ *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 108, 431, 438, 439, 446, 449a), and 449b). See also chapter six, p. 243.

⁵⁷ *RIC* IV.2, Severus Alexander, nos. 524, 596, 640, and 641.

the emperor in military dress or with military attributes (spear, standards) and sometimes soldiers and a standard bearer.

In common with the coin types promoting *adventus* and in contrast with the *profectio* types, the coins showing *adlocutio* scenes were distributed more evenly throughout the third century. Their occurrence in the beginning, middle and end of the third century, however, does not imply that many emperors issued this coin type; only during the reigns of Macrinus, Severus Alexander, Gordian III, Valerian, Gallienus, and Probus were coin types struck on which the emperors can be seen while addressing the soldiers.⁵⁸ This pattern substantiates Campbell's assertion that coins referring to *adlocutio* are relatively infrequent and that they seem to hint at particular occasions.⁵⁹ However, the relative lack of *adlocutio* types in the third century (only six emperors issued them) does not match the claim, also made by Campbell, that 'the fact that emperors addressed the troops regularly tells us something about their hopes and fears and the inherent pressures of being emperor'.⁶⁰ If *adlocutio* scenes reflected the emperor's problems concerning the Empire and his emperorship, it is striking that *adlocutiones* appeared relatively infrequently on third-century coins. This becomes even more remarkable when we consider the main aim of *adlocutio*; *adlocutio* might have helped the emperor to secure the armies' loyalty and to receive support for his position and (certain aspects of) imperial policy.⁶¹ As most emperors' positions were anything but stable in the third century and depended to a great extent on the armed forces, one would expect that emperors would have exploited (the propagation of) *adlocutio*; types propagating *adlocutio* emphasize the direct relationship between the emperor and his troops. Of course, coinage probably was not the most important medium for recording or announcing *adlocutio* scenes.

In any case, *adlocutio* scenes demonstrate that the two military roles of the emperor – as fellow-soldier and as general – could overlap; they display the emperor speaking to his troops in the function of commander, confirming his military excellence, while simultaneously acting as fellow-soldier calling his soldiers *commilitones*.

⁵⁸ *RIC* IV.2, Macrinus, no. 210; *RIC* IV.2, Severus Alexander, nos. 544, 545; *RIC* IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 313a), 313b); *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, no. 57; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 106, 107; *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 289, 292, 320–322, 580, 581.

⁵⁹ Campbell, *The Emperor and the Roman Army*, p. 84.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 72. This is probably the reason why emperors also addressed the troops formally at their accession to the throne; at that particular moment they especially needed the army's support (see *ibid.*, p. 80).

To sum up, third-century emperors were often depicted as *imperator* on their coins. Only the short-lived emperors Pertinax, Didius Julianus, Diadumenian, Gordian I, Gordian II, Balbinus, Pupienus, Hostilian, and Saloninus did not appear as military leaders on their coinage.⁶² Either they preferred other forms of military representation (see the next sections of this chapter) or they did not use any form of military representation at all (as discussed above). The remaining Augusti, however, all displayed their military superiority on coins. Thus, coin types propagating the emperor's high military status were distributed at all times throughout the third century. On the one hand, this emphasis on the emperor's military superiority in the third century could suggest that displaying it was important. Whether the emperor's weak position in the third century and his dependence on the armed forces provoked such depiction is speculative. Emperors could have emphasized their military authority in order to convince the armies of their military capacities and care for their soldiers. On the other hand, the even distribution of types propagating the emperor's superior military status throughout the third century could also indicate the commonplace character of these types.

The role of the emperor as 'brother-in-arms' was not widespread on third-century imperial coinage (only indirectly through *adlocutio* scenes). Although Campbell points out that emperors from the early principate onward commonly used the term *commilito* in direct contacts with soldiers and behaved as their comrade to varying extents, the role of the emperor as *imperator* remained predominant on imperial coinage.⁶³

3. VICTORIES

C'est la victoire qui a fondé l'Empire; c'est par elle qu'il se perpétue.⁶⁴

The myth of the Empire's eternal victory was the most powerful Roman myth. The growth and power of the Empire had created it; through military victories the Romans rose to power, expanded and maintained

⁶² On some of their coin types, Gordian I (*RIC* IV.2, Gordianus I, nos. 1, 7), Balbinus (*RIC* IV.2, Balbinus, nos. 5, 16, 17), and Pupienus (*RIC* IV.2, Pupienus, nos. 5, 15) are depicted wearing a toga, but carrying a *parazonium*. Because of the toga, the emperor here seems to be represented as a civilian and not as a military man.

⁶³ Campbell, *The Emperor and the Roman Army*, pp. 34–59.

⁶⁴ H. Graillot, "Victoria", in: Ch.V. Daremberg, E. Saglio and E. Pottier eds., *Dictionnaire des antiquités grecques et romaines* 5.2 (Paris, 1919), pp. 831–854; p. 839, quoted in J.R. Fears, "The theology of victory at Rome: approaches and problems", *ANRW* II 17.2 (1981), pp. 736–826; p. 737.



Image 2 *Victoria* (RIC IV.2, Balbinus, no. 8)

their might.⁶⁵ Consequently, devotion to Victoria, the goddess personifying victory, spread widely.⁶⁶ As observed by Fears, victory was viewed as ‘a divine gift of supernatural power which could be bestowed upon a specific man’.⁶⁷ It is therefore obvious why Roman emperors continued to emphasize military triumph. By emphasizing his victories the emperor, whose power was largely based on his position of *imperator*, could legitimize his power and show his subjects why he deserved his position. Through successful military activities the emperor confirmed his right to rule.⁶⁸

Coins propagating victory were but one means through which victorious rulership was confirmed (*image 2*). Some coin types on the one hand depict victory as granted by Olympian gods (see coin types propagating Jupiter/Mars Victor which are discussed in chapter three), while, on the other hand, other types showing or referring to Victoria suggest the goddess’ autonomy.⁶⁹

A wide range of third-century coin types refer to victory.⁷⁰ Only on coin types issued by Didius Julianus, Diadumenian and Saloninus are references

⁶⁵ M. McCormick, *Eternal Victory. Triumphal Rulership in Late Antiquity, Byzantium, and the Early Medieval West* (Cambridge, 1986), p. 3.

⁶⁶ Fears, “The theology of victory”, p. 743. On the role of the goddess Victoria in Roman history, see Hölscher, *Victoria Romana*.

⁶⁷ Fears, “The theology of victory”, p. 745. See also A.R. Bellinger and M. Alkins Berlin-court, *Victory as a Coin Type* (New York, 1962), p. 54.

⁶⁸ McCormick, *Eternal Victory*, p. 4.

⁶⁹ Fears, “The theology of victory”, pp. 744–745.

⁷⁰ Concerning victory types, Vermeule argues that the periods of Victoria’s ‘numismatic popularity’ can be compared with the use of Victoria in other forms of official and military art, see Vermeule, “Aspects of victoria on Roman coins, gems and in monumental art”, p. 3.

to victory absent. In addition, under Pertinax no more than one type was minted that emphasized a victorious Rome.⁷¹ The remaining 31 Augusti put many references to victory on their coins: even rulers who did not gain a victory or lead a campaign propagated *victoria*. Victory types thus do not necessarily correspond with actual military events. Moreover, when we consider that even the majority of short-lived emperors minted coin types referring to victory, it becomes clear that issuing victory types was the prevailing standard for rulers in the third century.⁷²

Victory was thus not only displayed on coins when a real victory was gained, but also propagated when it did not reflect recent military events. It seems, then, that victory or victoriousness had become a more abstract quality of emperorship.⁷³ In any case, however, the propagation of victory was considered important: whether or not the emperor deserved credit for any actual victory, association with the concept could help to legitimize his power. Only the short-lived emperors Pertinax and Didius Julianus were the exceptions to the pattern.⁷⁴

The multiple victory types struck during the whole of the third century are composed of different constituents. This variety seems to demonstrate the diversity and ubiquity of imperial victoriousness.⁷⁵ Here, one can distinguish between types referring to *victoria* in general (by means of references to the concept or personification of *victoria* in legend and/or image, depictions of trophy and arms or of the emperor in a triumphal *quadriga*) and types propagating specific military victories.

Because coin types bearing legends that directly link victory and deities are discussed in the next chapter, they will be left out of consideration here. In addition, only outlines of the many victory types are sketched here.

⁷¹ RIC IV.I, Pertinax, no. 23. On this coin type Rome is depicted together with Victoria. This type bears the legend ROMAE AETERNAE COS II and is divided into the category 'Aeternitas-messages'.

⁷² On the propagation of imperial victory in the early fourth century, see J. Wienand, "Der blutbefleckte Kaiser. Constantin und die martialische Inszenierung eines prekären Sieges", in: M. Fahlenbock, L. Madersbacher and I. Schneider eds., *Inszenierung des Sieges – Sieg der Inszenierung* (Innsbruck, 2010), pp. 223–240 and J. Wienand, *Der Kaiser als Sieger. Untersuchungen zur militärischen Repräsentation Constantins I* (forthcoming).

⁷³ Already from the second century onward victory grew into a more abstract quality, see McCormick, *Eternal Victory*, p. 28. According to Martin, it became 'a dynastic, protective and enriched divinity and it represented the unity of power in its continuity', J.-P. Martin, "La mystique de la Victoire au Bas Empire", in: M. Rouche ed., *Clovis. Histoire & Mémoire* vol. 1 (Paris, 1997), pp. 383–393; p. 383.

⁷⁴ Since very few coin types were minted under Diadumenian and Saloninus, no statement about their possible exceptionality can be made.

⁷⁵ McCormick, *Eternal Victory*, p. 26.

Thirty emperors signify victory in general on their coins.⁷⁶ Certainly not all references allude to actual circumstances. The majority of these types refer either to *victoria* in the legend or depicts victory's personification, or both. Many of these coins bear the legend VICTORIA AVG/AVGG and show an image of Victoria with her attributes (mainly the wreath and palm). On coins of Septimius Severus, Elagabalus, Gordian III, Gallienus, Probus and Carus *victoria* is directly linked to the emperor by putting the emperor's name next to VICTORIA in the coin's legend.⁷⁷

During the reigns of Caracalla, Macrinus, Elagabalus, Maximinus Thrax, Gordian III, Valerian, Gallienus, Aurelian, Florian, Probus, Carus, Carinus, and Numerian, coins were struck showing Victoria bestowing victory directly upon the emperor. The imagery on these coin types, which appear chronologically throughout the whole third century, comprises the emperor being crowned by Victoria or Victoria presenting a wreath to the emperor.⁷⁸ These images are complemented with legends, some referring to *victoria* while others feature for instance standard imperial titulature, FIDES EXERCITVS or CONCORDIA MILITVM.

Thus, images of Victoria also appear on coin types without any reference to victory in the legend.⁷⁹ Because there are images of Victoria present on all sorts of coin types communicating various messages, not all types showing them can be assigned to the category 'military representation'.⁸⁰ For example, coin types portraying the emperor receiving a globe with

⁷⁶ Emperors on whose coins victory in general is propagated: Pertinax, Septimius Severus, Caracalla, Geta, Macrinus, Elagabalus, Severus Alexander, Maximinus Thrax, Gordian I, Gordian II, Balbinus, Pupienus, Gordian III, Philippus I, Philippus II, Decius, Hostilian, Trebonianus Gallus, Volusian, Aemilian, Valerian, Gallienus, Claudius Gothicus, Quintillus, Aurelian, Tacitus, Florian, Probus, Carus, Carinus, Numerian. Some of these types do not belong (only) to the category 'military representation'.

⁷⁷ Under the reign of Septimius Severus a coin type bearing the legend VICTOR ANTONINI AVG was struck (*RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, no. 328A). Obviously, this type refers to Caracalla; it could be a hybrid. Additionally, Severus issued coin types bearing the obscure legend VICTOR IVST AVG (*RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 362, 362A, 427A).

⁷⁸ Emperor being crowned by Victoria: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 70a), 70b), 299a)–299e), 499a), 499b), 506, 537; *RIC* IV.2, Macrinus, nos. 36, 47, 48, 152, 153, 160–163; *RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, no. 26A; *RIC* IV.2, Maximinus Thrax, no. 114; *RIC* IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 139, 175; *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, no. 54; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 108, 285, 313; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 3, 81, 82, 87, 127–129, 363, 454; *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 253, 400–402; *RIC* V.2, Carinus, no. 317; *RIC* V.2, Numerianus, nos. 401, 443, 462. Emperor receiving a wreath from Victoria: *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, no. 291; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 450–453; *RIC* V.1, Aurelian, nos. 368, 369; *RIC* V.1, Florianus, nos. 42, 116; *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 851–855, 907, 908, 910; *RIC* V.2, Carus, no. 121; *RIC* V.2, Carinus, no. 328.

⁷⁹ Sometimes accompanying Victoria are other personifications (e.g. Virtus, Pax) or figures (e.g. captives).

⁸⁰ See also above, pp. 78–79 with n. 70.

Victoria on top or simply Victoria out of the hands of a deity, can rarely be classified as 'military'.⁸¹ This depends on the legend accompanying the image. In any case, both kinds of imagery demonstrate that gods could grant victory to the emperor. Moreover, depictions of a globe with Victoria on top show that victory underpinned imperial power. It is not surprising, then, that most emperors emphasized victory; the fact that Victoria appears on types communicating various kinds of messages confirms this.

Coins could also refer to victory in general by depicting the emperor in a *quadriga*. Caracalla, Macrinus, Elagabalus, Severus Alexander, Maximinus Thrax, Gordian III, Philippus I, Trebonianus Gallus, Valerian, Gallienus, Probus, Carinus, and Numerian each appear in a *quadriga* (with Philippus I, Trebonianus Gallus, and Valerian riding together with their sons).⁸² The image of a *quadriga* can, however, be ambiguous; sometimes it is not clear whether the particular coin type depicting a wagon connotes military associations.⁸³ Yet, when the *quadriga* is classified as a triumphal chariot in the *RIC* or military symbolism (images of Victoria or soldiers) complements the emperor in *quadriga*, it is plausible that the given coin type promotes military connections and refers to imperial victory.⁸⁴ Imperial victory is clearly communicated on coin types presenting the emperor in a *quadriga*, as minted during Caracalla's, Macrinus', Elagabalus', Severus Alexander's, Maximinus Thrax', Gordian's (III), Philippus' (I), Trebonianus Gallus', Valerian's, and Gallienus' reign.⁸⁵

⁸¹ See chapter 3.

⁸² *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 77, 87a)–87c), 103, 104, 210, 499a), 499b), 506; *RIC* IV.2, Macrinus, nos. 36, 47, 48; *RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, nos. 26A, 35, 36, 54, 55, 170, 171, 174–175A, 180, 182, 183, 296–298, 308–313, 316, 317, 331, 337, 338; *RIC* IV.2, Severus Alexander, nos. 15–17, 56, 56A, 98, 99, 121, 448, 452, 471, 495–499; *RIC* IV.2, Maximinus Thrax, nos. 2, 27–29, 114; *RIC* IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 50B, 135, 139, 173, 276a), 276b), 284, 320–322; *RIC* IV.3, Philippus I, no. 11; *RIC* IV.3, Trebonianus Gallus, no. 98, *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, no. 156; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 313, *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 20, 150, 154, 412, 413, 454; *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 1, 247, 579, 614–616, 914; *RIC* V.2, Carinus, no. 226; *RIC* V.2, Numerianus, no. 427. On a coin type of Valerian, the emperor is depicted in a *biga* (*RIC* V.1, Valerianus, no. 54).

⁸³ See also Dufraigne, *Adventus Augusti, Adventus Christi*, p. 66.

⁸⁴ The emperor's *adventus* could also be represented by picturing the emperor in a *quadriga* (see p. 72). I classify the image of the emperor in a *quadriga* only as an *adventus* type when the coin type's legend refers to *adventus* (or *reditus*). According to Dufraigne, from Antoninus Pius onward images of the emperor in a triumphal chariot could also celebrate the imperial consulate, see Dufraigne, *Adventus Augusti, Adventus Christi*, p. 74.

⁸⁵ *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 77, 87a)–87c), 499a), 499b), 506; *RIC* IV.2, Macrinus, nos. 36, 47, 48; *RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, nos. 26A, 36, 296–298; *RIC* IV.2, Severus Alexander, no. 499; *RIC* IV.2, Maximinus Thrax, nos. 2, 27–29, 114; *RIC* IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 135, 139, 320–322; *RIC* IV.3, Philippus I, no. 11; *RIC* IV.3, Trebonianus Gallus, no. 98; *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, no. 156; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 313; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 454.

On other *quadriga* types of Caracalla, Elagabalus, Severus Alexander, Gordian III and Gallienus as well as on the *quadriga* types of Probus, Carinus, and Numerian, the emperor is seated in a *quadriga*, while additional military imagery or the classification of the *quadriga* as 'triumphal *quadriga*' is lacking. Still, these types could have referred to imperial victory.⁸⁶ However, these types do not necessarily have a military connotation. To an extent, the same arguments can be used: the *quadriga*'s classification as a 'triumphal *quadriga*' as well as additional military imagery is absent from these coins. Moreover, the *quadriga* can also be seen as a divine attribute; many deities (for instance Sol, Jupiter, Mars) are depicted in *quadrigae* on all sorts of coins, reliefs and other sculptures.⁸⁷ The imagery of the emperor in a *quadriga*, therefore, could have spread a message that the emperor's status was beyond the human ranks – in other words, that the emperor ranked closer to the divine realm.

These roles, the emperor as military and as divine leader, are not mutually exclusive. Probably, they complemented each other on some coin types that disseminated a more complex message. Confirmation of this emerges in the presence of both the eagletipped scepter (alluding to Jupiter) and the branch (alluding to Victoria) on some coin types with clear military connotations as well as on some types without clear military connotations. Thus, the imperial triumph can be understood either as a divine gift or as means of enhancing the emperor's status.

Apart from imperial triumphs in general, sometimes victories in particular combat scenes were stressed on coinage; among them, *victoria Parthica*, *victoria Germanica*, and *victoria Gothica* were the most favourite. *Victoria Parthica* was coined by Septimius Severus, Caracalla, Macrinus, Valerian, Gallienus, and Aurelian.⁸⁸ Coins of Septimius Severus, Caracalla, and Geta

⁸⁶ One could argue that a *quadriga* symbolizes victory anyway and the omission of the words 'triumphal *quadriga*' might be attributed to the *RIC* editors' inconsistency.

⁸⁷ For an early example of Zeus (and Herakles) standing in a *quadriga*, see M.B. Moore, "The central group in the Gigantomachy of the old Athena temple on the Acropolis", *JRA* 99.4 (1995), pp. 633–639. On the *quadriga* as divine attribute see for instance Berrens, *Sonnenkult und Kaisertum*, p. 18.

⁸⁸ *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 55, 62, 63, 90, 121, 142a), 142b), 153, 176, 184, 185, 295, 321, 495–496b), 512, 514, 690a)–690c), 696, 754, 828; *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 49A, 54a)–55, 63–65, 78, 79, 144a)–145, 168A, 297a)–298b), 299a)–299e), 314a)–315b), 346, 353; *RIC* IV.2, Macrinus, nos. 49, 50, 96–98, 164–166, 209; *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, nos. 22, 262, 291; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 453; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 309, 310; *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, no. 240.

emphasized *victoria Britannica*,⁸⁹ while *victoria Germanica* was propagated by Caracalla, Maximinus Thrax, Decius, Herennius Etruscus, Valerian, Gallienus, Claudius Gothicus, Aurelian, Probus, and Carinus.⁹⁰ The coinage of Claudius Gothicus, Quintillus, Aurelian, Tacitus, and Probus represented *victoria Gothica*.⁹¹ *Victoria Carpica* and *victoria Pontica* were propagated on third-century coinage more rarely; references to these victories only appear on the coins of Philippus I and Tacitus respectively.⁹² Many of these publicized victories have some basis in reality; they were either real victories or imagined victories based on actual military campaigns.⁹³

⁸⁹ Specific victories became an inheritable aspect of emperorship from Septimius Severus onward, see McCormick, *Eternal Victory*, p. 21 and below, pp. 84–85.

⁹⁰ *Victoria Britannica*: RIC IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 247, 302, 302A, 332–337, 808, 809, 812a), 812b), 818, 819, 834, 837a)–837A; RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 169, 172–174, 230–231A, 464–465b), 467, 483a)–484, 487a), 487b), 490, 516, 521–522b); RIC IV.1, Geta, nos. 91, 92, 166, 167, 172a), 172b), 178, 180, 186, 191a), 191b). *Victoria Germanica*: RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 237, 316; RIC IV.2, Maximinus Thrax, nos. 23, 70–74, 90–94, 115, 116; RIC IV.3, Trajan Decius, no. 43; RIC IV.3, Herennius Etruscus, no. 154; RIC V.1, Valerianus, nos. 129, 130, 132, 181, 203, 263–265; RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 2, 3, 39–52, 61–63, 95–98, 173–180a), 194–196, 245, 283–285, 404, 406, 429, 430, 451, 452; RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 122, 307, 308, 377, 400–402, 435–437; RIC V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 108, 247–250; RIC V.1, Aurelian, no. 355; RIC V.2, Probus, nos. 141, 142, 149, 217–223, 254–259, 268, 269, 272–278, 299, 300, 425; RIC V.2, Carinus, nos. 319, 320.

⁹¹ RIC V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 251, 252; RIC V.1, Quintillus, no. 87; RIC V.1, Aurelian, nos. 339, 340; RIC V.1, Tacitus, nos. 110, 171–173, 199, 200; RIC V.2, Probus, no. 10.

⁹² RIC IV.3, Philippus I, no. 66; RIC V.1, Tacitus, no. 204.

⁹³ Because victories are specified in some cases, the coins presenting these victories form a good test case concerning the relationship between image and reality. A general overview of the third-century military activities is provided in chapter one, see pp. 13–14. Here, on the basis of Mennen, *Power and Status*, pp. 29–30 with n. 23, 24 and 26, a more detailed overview is provided of the external tribes/peoples against whom military activities were undertaken by the Romans in the third century, listed per emperor. *Septimius Severus*: Caledonian and Maeatae tribes (Cass. Dio 77.15.2; Herodian 3.14.1ff; A.R. Birley, *The Roman government of Britain* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 195–203), Parthians (Cass. Dio 75.1–3 and 76.9; H.A. Septimius Severus 16.1–5). *Caracalla*: Alamanni (H.A. Caracalla 5), Caledonian and Maeatae tribes (ended in peace; Cass. Dio 78.1.1; Herodian 3.15.6), Parthians (Cass. Dio 79.1ff; Herodian 4.11.2ff). *Macrinus*: Parthians (ended in peace; Cass. Dio 79.26). *Severus Alexander*: Germanic tribes (Herodian 6.7.5; H.A. Severus Alexander 59), Persians (Herodian 6.4–6; H.A. Severus Alexander 50). *Maximinus Thrax*: Germanic tribes (H.A. The Two Maximini 12.1–4; Herodian 7.1–9), Sarmatai (H.A. The Two Maximini 13.3), free Dacians. *Gordian III*: Persians (H.A. The Three Gordiani 26.3–27.3). *Philippus Arabs*: Carpi (Zosimus 1.20; I. Piso, *An der Nordgrenze des Römischen Reiches: ausgewählte Studien* (1972–2003) (Stuttgart, 2005), pp. 51–59), Persians (ended with peace). *Decius*: Goths. *Valerian*: Persians (SEG 17, 528). *Gallienus*: Alamanni, Goths (H.A. Gallienus 13.7–10), Franks, Iuthungi, Heruli, Persians (under Ballista and Odaenathus). *Claudius Gothicus*: Alamanni (Epitome de Caesaribus 34.2), Goths (Zosimus 1.45.1). *Aurelian*: Sarmatai, Carpi (H.A. Aurelianus 30.4), Goths (H.A. Aurelianus 22.2), Iuthungi, Vandals, Persians (H.A. Aurelianus 35.5; Zosimus 1.62.1; Zonaras 12.27). *Tacitus*: Goths. *Probus*: Alamanni, Germanic tribes, Sarmatai (H.A., Probus 16.2), Franks, Vandals (Zosimus 1.68), Burgundians,

Gallienus, for instance, forms a good example of the latter; he seems to have magnified small events from his campaigns and labeled them as victories in order to win *aurum coronarium* or for propagandistic reasons.⁹⁴ However, even on the coins of emperors who sometimes reigned only for a few months and had therefore hardly any time to react to actual events, references to actual events can be detected. Only the references to *victoria Gothica* on the coinage of Quintillus seem to have no connection with reality.⁹⁵ This short-lived emperor might have wanted to share in the victory of his brother, Claudius Gothicus, over the Goths.⁹⁶

Although Caracalla's campaigns against the Parthians and the claimed victory were not a fabrication, the victory has a doubtful character.⁹⁷ Herodian reports that Severus' son wanted to receive the title Parthicus at any cost. He therefore caused a massacre of the Parthians and eventually received the title.⁹⁸ Although Herodian's report might have been an attempt to paint the emperor as a monster, the triumph was probably not a 'normal' imperial victory. Apparently, to issue coin types referring to particular victories, imagined or real, some basis in reality was required. These kinds of victory types were thus not only used to legitimize imperial power but also informed Roman subjects about imperial activities and successes.

Particular victories gained by the emperor could also be communicated by means of the emperor's titulature on the coin's reverse. McCormick mentions four key moments in the propagation of imperial victory titles. Until the end of the first century, only Germanicus was employed. The victory of Trajan over the Dacians, which provided the emperor with the title Dacicus, triggered the use of different victory names. A victory title in combination with *maximus* was ascribed to Lucius Verus for the first time. Finally, Septimius Severus was the first emperor who shared his victory names with his sons, even when they had not participated in the

Isaurians (H.A. Probus 16.4; Zosimus 1.69–70). *Carus*: Sarmatai, Persians (H.A. Carus 8.1; Zonaras 12.30). *Carinus*: Germanic tribes. For further references, see H. Halfmann, *Itinera principum: Geschichte und Typologie der Kaiserreisen im Römischen Reich* (Stuttgart, 1986), pp. 216–42; Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle*, pp. 156–171, 177–259, 261–262.

⁹⁴ *Aurum coronarium*: De Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus*, pp. 90–91. See further chapter eight, p. 278.

⁹⁵ See p. 78. *RIC* V.1, Quintillus, no. 87. On Quintillus, see Potter, *The Roman Empire at Bay*, p. 268.

⁹⁶ On victories as an inheritable aspect of emperorship, see below.

⁹⁷ The campaigns against the Parthians that took place during Caracalla's sole reign are meant here.

⁹⁸ Herodian 4.10.1–11.9 (φόνον, πάσας ἐπινικίους τιμὰς).

campaign.⁹⁹ As did references to *victoria* on coin types of emperors who did not gain a military triumph or lead a military campaign, the latter also demonstrates that victory became a more abstract quality of emperors. As for third-century coinage, (*Parthicus*) *Arabicus* (*Parthicus*) *Adiabenicus* and *Parthicus Maximus* are included in Septimius Severus' titulature on some of his coin types.¹⁰⁰ The former title evokes Septimius Severus' victories over the Arabs and Adiabeni, two peoples who were supporting Severus' enemy Pescennius Niger and were vassals of the Parthians.¹⁰¹ *Parthicus Maximus* became a fixed part of Caracalla's titulature. Since all of Caracalla's coins bearing this title were issued during Severus' and his joint reign, *Parthicus Maximus* must refer to the victory gained by Caracalla's father and not to Caracalla's own ambiguous victory over the Parthians.¹⁰² Finally, *Germanicus Maximus* appears on Valerian's and Gallienus' coins.¹⁰³

The legends emphasizing specific victories often accompany images of trophy and arms, captives, and/or Victoria. The emperor himself is depicted on such coin types issued by Caracalla, Maximinus Thrax, Decius, Valerian, Gallienus, Aurelian, Tacitus, often together with Victoria, captives, or a trophy.¹⁰⁴

A unique coin type related to imperial triumph is Probus' coin type propagating *FIDES VICTOR*.¹⁰⁵ This phrase, 'loyalty to' or 'faith in *victor*/*Victoria*',¹⁰⁶ expresses directly one of the emperor's main concerns: the legitimization of his rule by stressing his capacity for gaining victories.

⁹⁹ McCormick, *Eternal Victory*, pp. 21–22.

¹⁰⁰ *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 41, 55, 58, 62, 63, 63A, 64, 76, 90, 153, 176, 184, 185, 321, 346, 466, 494A, 494B, 495, 496A, 496B, 512, 690A, 690B, 690C, 696. Severus received the double titles *Parthicus Arabicus* and *Parthicus Adiabenicus* from the senate in 195 but the emperor refused the title *Parthicus*. However, the double titles do appear on coins and in inscriptions (Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle*, p. 158; P. Kneissl, *Die Siegestitulatur der römischen Kaiser. Untersuchungen zu den Siegerbeinamen des ersten und zweiten Jahrhunderts* (Göttingen, 1969), p. 126). Severus received and accepted the title *Parthicus maximus* in 198 (Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle*, p. 158).

¹⁰¹ A.R. Birley, *Septimius Severus. The African Emperor*, 3rd edition (London and New York, 1999), p. 116; Kneissl, *Die Siegestitulatur der römischen Kaiser*, pp. 126–138.

¹⁰² *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 54A, 54B, 55, 63, 64, 65, 346.

¹⁰³ *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, nos. 9, 9A; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 17, 18, 19, 60, 141, 142, 382, 383; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 200.

¹⁰⁴ *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 299A–299E, 315A, 315B; *RIC* IV.2, Maximinus Thrax, nos. 70, 71, 93, 94, 115; *RIC* IV.3, Trajan Decius, no. 43; *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, no. 291; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 285, 451–453; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 310; *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, no. 240; *RIC* V.1, Tacitus, no. 204.

¹⁰⁵ *RIC* V.2, Probus, no. 30.

¹⁰⁶ *LIMC* 4.1 (lemma 'Fides'), pp. 133–137.

In addition, two coin types of Numerian bear the legend VNDIQVE VICTORES.¹⁰⁷ This message implies that the Romans were victorious everywhere, a statement which verges on proclaiming invincibility.

One step beyond even propagating imperial victories, either in general or in particular, is the proclamation of the emperor's invincibility. Such a message was communicated explicitly on coins of Septimius Severus by presenting the emperor as INVICTVS IMP (TROPAEA).¹⁰⁸ A coin type minted during the reign of Claudius Gothicus bears the legend INVICTVS AVG.¹⁰⁹ On this type, the emperor is linked to Hercules' invincibility through a depiction of the demi-god. Gallienus' and Quintillus' coins portrayed only INVICTVS together with an image of Sol.¹¹⁰ These coins, on which *invictus* modifies either Sol or Hercules, can be associated with invincibility as such. Obviously, besides a military connotation these Hercules and Sol types also incorporate a strong 'religious' component.¹¹¹ Coins of Septimius Severus, Caracalla, Probus and Carus propagate the military prowess of the invincible emperors.¹¹² Some of Elagabalus' newly introduced coin types bear the legend INVICTVS SACERDOS AVG, thus promoting an invincible priest-emperor.¹¹³ It is doubtful whether these *invictus* types all directly connote imperial triumph. In any case, they do publicize the military capacities that the emperor possessed or claimed to possess, and/or the actually or potentially victorious military situation of the Empire. Other legends such as VICTORIOSO SEMPER, VICTORIA AETERNA, or VICTORIA PERPETVA, which refer to the eternity of victory, propagated invincibility as a permanent and immanent imperial quality.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁷ *RIC* V.2, Numerianus, nos. 422 and 423.

¹⁰⁸ *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 356, 389, 390, 391, 392, 392A, 393, 394, 395, 441, 441A.

¹⁰⁹ *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, no. 50.

¹¹⁰ *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 639, 640; *RIC* V.1, Quintillus, no. 56.

¹¹¹ Therefore, they belong to the representational category 'divine association' as well as 'military representation'.

¹¹² *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, no. 269; *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 155; *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456; *RIC* V.2, Carus, no. 117. These coins belong to the representational category 'virtues'. On *virtus* as connected to invincibility, see below, pp. 176–177.

¹¹³ See below, p. 147. Because the function of the emperor as servant of his god Elagabal is central on these types, they belong to the representational category 'divine association'. *RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, nos. 86, 87, 88, 191, 350, 351.

¹¹⁴ These coin types belong all to the representational category '*aeternitas*'. VICTORIOSO SEMPER: *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 143, 144, 224. VICTORIA AETERNA: *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 94, 95, 141, 170; *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 23, 47a), 47b), 48; *RIC* IV.2, Maximinus Thrax, no. 15; *RIC* IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 154, 155, 156, 165, 166, 337a), 337b), 337c), 338a), 338b); *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, no. 176; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 76, 123,

The above section has tried to create some structure in the complex of references to victory. Naturally, this arrangement is somewhat arbitrary; the dividing lines between and within those groups are not rigid; the various elements which refer separately to *victoria* can also appear together on one type (for example the emperor standing in a *quadriga* while he is being crowned by Victoria) or imagery referring to victory in general is present on coins propagating a specific victory. Of course, in the latter case the legend decides whether the coin type as a whole refers to victory in general (thus as an imperial quality) or to a specific victory. At any rate, when the numerous references to *victoria* are considered as a whole, only one conclusion is suitable: referring to real events or not, victory played a large and important role in third-century imperial representation. Victoriousness seems to have been considered vital for the ruler's claim to power.

4. DIRECT REFERENCES TO THE ARMED FORCES

Imperial victories could only be accomplished through armed forces fighting in the service of Rome. Originally, the Roman imperial armies had two important functions.¹¹⁵ On the one hand, their task was to protect the Empire against foreign enemies or, put differently, to guarantee the *pax Romana*.¹¹⁶ On the other hand, the troops had to safeguard the rule of the emperor over the Empire. Yet, in the third century, it became increasingly difficult for the armies to discharge their first duty because of the numerous external threats which often occurred simultaneously or shortly after each other. In addition, the soldiers' task of safeguarding the emperor's rule seems to have lost some importance in the period 193–284.¹¹⁷

This was the first time that the soldiers' characters gradually began to be corrupted. They learned to have an evil and insatiable lust for money and to ignore any feeling of respect for their emperors. The fact that there

291, 297, 361, 373, 586. VICTORIA PERPETVA: *RIC* V.1, Tacitus, nos. 201, 202, 203; *RIC* V.1, Florianus, nos. 23, 42; *RIC* V.2, Probus, no. 830.

¹¹⁵ G. Alföldy, "Das Heer in der Sozialstruktur des römischen Kaiserreiches", in: M. Speidel ed., *Römische Heeresgeschichte. Beiträge 1962–1985 von Géza Alföldy* (Amsterdam, 1987), pp. 26–42; p. 26.

¹¹⁶ Hekster, "Fighting for Rome", p. 96. See above, p. 63.

¹¹⁷ Obviously, this does not mean that no military coups occurred before the third century. For a brief overview, see A.R. Birley, "Making emperors. Imperial instrument or independent force?", in: P. Erdkamp ed., *A Companion to the Roman Army* (Malden MA, 2007), pp. 379–394.

was nobody to take revenge on the perpetrators of this savage murder of an emperor, and nobody to prevent the shameful auction and sale of the empire, was a prime cause in the development of a shameful state of indiscipline that had permanent consequences for the future. The ever-increasing avarice of the soldiers and their contempt for authority had developed to the extent of murder.¹¹⁸

The latter development correlates with the high number of external threats which made the imperial authorities rely heavily on their legions in order to maintain the Empire's unity. The imperial dependence on the armed forces in the third century made the troops more powerful and, consequently, provided them with a key-position in choosing emperors. Yet, the fact that the armies in the third century became instrumental in the choice of rulers could not only be attributed to the increase of military problems and activities; the military units' strong regionalization, a development which reached its climax in the third century, was influential too.¹¹⁹ Since many legions were permanently stationed in the same region and recruits also came from that particular area, the soldiers must have felt more connected with the region they were stationed in than with the Roman imperial center. Logically, ties with their own direct leaders were stronger than their bond with the distant emperor.

Especially for the third-century emperor, who had to deal with, on the one hand, increasing military problems and, on the other hand, severely regionalized, and thus divided, armed forces whose loyalty was anything but self-evident, it was thus of great importance to create a bond with his troops. The most straightforward way in which this could be done was by referring directly to the armies on imperial coinage (*image* 3).¹²⁰ This must have pleased the legions and, furthermore, it was the most direct means for displaying their key-position. After all, as mentioned before, these coins must have circulated through the soldiers to a large extent.¹²¹

It is possible to discern two different kinds of references to the armed forces on third-century imperial coinage: general references to the troops

¹¹⁸ Herodian 2.6.14: τότε δὴ καὶ πρῶτον ὑποδιεφθάρη τὰ τῶν στρατιωτῶν ἥθη, καὶ χρημάτων ἐδιδάχθησαν ἀπληστον καὶ αἰσχροῦ ἐπιθυμίαν καταφρόνησιν τε τῆς πρὸς τοὺς ἄρχοντας αἰδοῦς. τὸ γὰρ μήτε τοῖς οὕτως ὡμῶς τετολμημένοισι ἐν φόνῳ τῷ βασιλικῷ ἐπεξίεναι τινά, μήτε τὴν οὕτως ἀπρεπῶς ἐπὶ χρήμασι κηρυχθεῖσαν καὶ πραθεῖσαν ἀρχὴν εἶναι τὸν κωλύοντα, ἀρχηγὸν καὶ αἴτιον ἀπρεποῦς καὶ ἀπειθοῦς καταστάσεως καὶ ἐς τὰ ἐπιόντα ἐγένετο, αἰεὶ αὐτοῖς τῆς φιλοχρηματίας καὶ τῆς τῶν ἀρχόντων καταφρονήσεως καὶ μέχρις αἵματος αὐξηθῆ εἰσις. Herodian writes this in response to Pertinax' murder and the auction of the Empire.

¹¹⁹ P. Erdkamp, "Introduction", in: idem, *A Companion to the Roman Army*, pp. 1–3; p. 3.

¹²⁰ See Hekster, "The Roman army and propaganda", p. 351.

¹²¹ See above, pp. 63–64.



Image 3 *Fides militum* (RIC IV.2, Maximinus Thrax, no. 43)

and references to specific units thereof. Out of all emperors with military themes on their coins, Gordian I, Gordian II, Balbinus, Pupienus, Philip-pus II, Herennius Etruscus, Hostilian, Trebonianus Gallus and Aemilian did not refer to the armed forces at all on their coin types. In the case of the two Gordiani, Balbinus, Pupienus, Philippus II, Decius' sons, and Aemilian, their extremely short reigns probably prevented any reference to the troops on their coins. The case of Trebonianus Gallus is more difficult to explain since he reigned for a somewhat longer period (two years). Moreover, he was acclaimed emperor by the military and during his reign he surely needed the legions' support desperately in his combat against the Goths and the Persians. Instead of referring directly to his legions, however, *LIBERTAS* (*PVBLICA*) was emphasized most on his and his son Volusian's coins.¹²² In the second half of the third century, this extensive propagation of *libertas* was exceptional.¹²³ *Libertas* coins were usually minted by emperors (and sometimes even usurpers) who claimed to have saved the Roman people from a tyrant.¹²⁴ However, in the case of Trebonianus Gallus this explanation is not appropriate, since his predecessor Decius had not died by the hands of Gallus, but was killed

¹²² RIC IV.3, Trebonianus Gallus, nos. 9–11, 20, 21, 24, 37–39, 50, 70, 114a)–114c); RIC IV.3, Volusianus, nos. 148, 149, 189, 190, 210, 226, 227, 255a), 255b).

¹²³ A.U. Stylow, *Libertas und Liberalitas: Untersuchungen zur innenpolitischen Propaganda der Römer* (Diss. Munich, 1972), pp. 71–72. In the first half of the century, only Caracalla and Severus Alexander minted a high number of *libertas* coins. On the *libertas* coins of Caracalla, see below, p. 245.

¹²⁴ J.M. Jones, *A Dictionary of Ancient Roman Coins* (London, 1990), p. 169.

in a battle against the Goths. Moreover, after the troops had acclaimed Gallus emperor, he elevated Decius' youngest son Hostilian to the rank of Caesar. Yet, Gallus might have had another motive for referring to *libertas* on fourteen of his types; this particular message was also deployed by rulers to claim that they had restored or maintained constitutional government.¹²⁵ Gallus, who came from a distinguished senatorial family,¹²⁶ may have wanted to make his subjects believe that he had indeed restored constitutional government; after all, some of his third-century predecessors were equestrians instead of senators.¹²⁷ If this was the case, then he might have wanted to conceal the non-constitutional way in which he had obtained the imperial purple, namely through his soldiers instead of by the senate's appointment.¹²⁸ Probably, this would explain the lack of direct references to the armed forces on his coins.

General references to the armed forces appear on the coinage of Didius Julianus, Septimius Severus, Caracalla, Geta, Macrinus, Elagabalus, Severus Alexander, Maximinus Thrax, Gordian III, Philippus I, Volusian, Valerian, Gallienus, Claudius Gothicus, Quintillus, Aurelian, Tacitus, Florian, Probus, Carus, Carinus and Numerian. Until the reign of Valerian, all coin types with general references to the troops (a coin type showing the emperor's titlature and an image of the legionary eagle between two standards minted under Caracalla excluded)¹²⁹ bear legends and/or show images pointing to *concordia* or *fides militum/exercitus/legionum*.¹³⁰ The strong emphasis on harmony within and loyalty of the armed forces reflects undoubtedly both the external threats and the problem of

¹²⁵ Jones, *A Dictionary of Ancient Roman Coins*, p. 169.

¹²⁶ Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle*, p. 209.

¹²⁷ Stylow provides another explanation for the *libertas* types of Gallus and Volusian. He argues that *libertas* and *liberalitas* became exchangeable concepts in the course of Empire and that, therefore, the *libertas* types of these two emperors were minted to celebrate their *congiarium*, see Stylow, *Libertas und Liberalitas*, pp. 71–72.

¹²⁸ Emperors who were designated by the army still attached importance to their acknowledgement by the senate, see above p. 63.

¹²⁹ *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 356.

¹³⁰ *Concordia*: *RIC* IV.1, Didius Julianus, nos. 1, 5, 11, 14; *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 108, 256, 502a), 502b); *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 232, 233; *RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, nos. 60, 187; *RIC* IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 65, 75, 288a)–288c); *RIC* IV.3, Volusianus, no. 213. *Fides*: *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 1, 349, 651, 658; *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 213, 266, 267; *RIC* IV.1, Geta, nos. 74, 74A; *RIC* IV.2, Macrinus, nos. 1, 3, 22, 22A, 33, 34, 43, 64–69, 123, 141, 157, 179–184; *RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, nos. 66–78, 345–347; *RIC* IV.2, Severus Alexander, nos. 138–139A, 193–195, 231, 278, 279, 429, 430, 552–556; *RIC* IV.2, Maximinus Thrax, nos. 7A, 18A, 43–45, 78–80; *RIC* IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 1, 7, 15, 26, 182–185, 209, 254a)–254c), 315; *RIC* IV.3, Philippus I, nos. 32a)–34A, 61, 62, 84A, 170–173c).

maintaining the armies' loyalty with which the emperors had to cope in the third century.

From the rule of Valerian onward, some new general references to the armed forces appeared on imperial coinage. References to the armies in general became thus more varied in the second half of the third century. In this way a broader and less homogenous military audience could be reached. During Valerian's reign types bearing the legend *GALLIENVS CVM EXER SVO* and showing an image of Jupiter and Victoria were struck.¹³¹ Such association of the name of Valerian's son with the armed forces suggested a direct relation between Gallienus and the legions. Similar objectives generated coins with the legend *CONSERVATOR EXERC/MILIT*, minted during the reigns of Gallienus and Tacitus.¹³² Under Valerian and Aurelian types showing the legends *VICTORIA EXERCIT* and *VICTOR LEG*, connecting imperial victory directly with the troops, were issued.¹³³ Valerian also propagated *FELICITAS EXERCITI* on his coins whereas *PAX EXERCITI* was put forward on the coins of Claudius Gothicus, Carus, and Carinus and *SALVS MILITVM* on Probus' coins.¹³⁴ The *FELICITAS/PAX EXERCITI* and *SALVS MILITVM* types associate (the invincibility or specific successes of) the armed forces and the dawning of a *saeculum aureum*. *GENIVS EXERCITI*, finally, receives praise on coin types of Gallienus, Claudius Gothicus, Aurelian, and Carinus.¹³⁵ These types demonstrate the important role that the armies played during the reigns of the specific emperors. This is corroborated by the extensive military activities taking place during these years.¹³⁶

The armed forces' prominence could also be acknowledged publicly by portraying a soldier on the reverses of coins, as happens on many coin types. This soldier often participates in a broad message communicated with the legend (for example *VIRTVS AVG/AVGG*). Valerian and Gallienus issued coin types that depict a soldier holding a shield (and on one of Valerian's types also a spear) and bear a legend which consists of standard

¹³¹ *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, nos. 7 and 8.

¹³² *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 173. *RIC* V.1, Tacitus, nos. 16, 17, 133, 134, 191, 192, 193, 194.

¹³³ *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, no. 131. *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, no. 145.

¹³⁴ *FELICITAS EXERCITI*: *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, no. 158. *PAX EXERCITI*: *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 131, 159, 160, 176; *RIC* V.2, Carus, nos. 72, 73, 74, 75; *RIC* V.2, Carinus, no. 301. *SALVS MILITVM*: *RIC* V.2, Probus, no. 98. See below, pp. 198, 203, 219.

¹³⁵ *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 199; *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 48, 49, 173, 174; *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, nos. 83, 345, 370; *RIC* V.2, Carinus, nos. 254, 255, 256.

¹³⁶ On the military activities during these reigns, see pp. 83–84 n. 93.

imperial titulature.¹³⁷ In these cases, the soldier could possibly be understood as a synecdoche for the armed forces in general.

The emphasis on *concordia* and *fides* in connection with the armies remained strong on third-century coins from Valerian's reign onward.¹³⁸ This can be seen as wholly reflecting the spirit of the age since harmony within the armed forces and loyalty of the troops were no matter of course in the third century. The usurpations that occurred in this era, culminating in the reign of Gallienus, provide the clearest proof for the decline of the troops' loyalty and harmony; it were mostly military men, hailed as emperor by their troops, who challenged imperial authority.

References to specific military units appear on coinage of Septimius Severus, Caracalla, Gordian III, Decius, and Gallienus. Septimius Severus, Caracalla, and Gordian III refer to naval forces or naval expeditions on their coins by showing an image of a galley.¹³⁹ On the coinage of Gordian III, the images of a galley together with oarsmen and soldiers are accompanied by the legend *TRAIECTVS AVG*.¹⁴⁰ Some references to naval forces on Septimius Severus' and Caracalla's coins might point to the military activities that took place in Roman Britain in the years 208–211 or to the passage to the East in 197.¹⁴¹

¹³⁷ *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, nos. 27, 207. *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 115.

¹³⁸ *Concordia*: *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, nos. 81, 82, 155, 191, 233–239; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 70–72, 132, 209, 253, 265, 376–379; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 472; *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 1, 3, 25, 26, 140–142; *RIC* V.1, Quintillus, nos. 1, 10–12, 45–47; *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, nos. 10, 11, 25, 59, 60, 75, 82, 86–88, 101–107, 117, 118, 120, 166–169, 191–203, 214, 219, 244, 245, 273, 342, 343, 356, 391, 392; *RIC* V.1, Tacitus, nos. 129–132, 183; *RIC* V.1, Florianus, nos. 6, 57–59, 97, 116; *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 23, 313, 325–342, 345, 346, 464, 465, 478–486, 531–535, 649–657, 663–668, 906–908. *Fides*: *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, nos. 6, 35, 36, 89, 90, 160, 161, 240, 241; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 11–16, 108, 137, 138, 213, 214, 267, 268, 381, 426; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 10–13, 33–41, 102, 192a, 366, 367, 416, 417, 445–447, 475–481, 567–571, 635; *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 5, 34–38, 121, 148, 149, 230; *RIC* V.1, Quintillus, nos. 2, 3, 18, 50–52, 63, 82; *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, nos. 28, 46, 89–94, 109, 124–127, 328, 329, 344, 393; *RIC* V.1, Tacitus, nos. 25–27, 86, 87, 107, 141; *RIC* V.1, Florianus, nos. 29–31; *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 27–29, 78, 147, 151, 169, 170, 265, 290, 295, 302, 363–372, 691–694, 823; *RIC* V.2, Carus, nos. 70–71a, 100, 102; *RIC* V.2, Carinus, nos. 228, 250–253; *RIC* V.2, Numerianus, no. 460.

¹³⁹ *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 215, 770, 771, 774, 801; *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 85A, 98, 426a), 426b), 429a), 429b), 429c), 437a), 437b), 437c); *RIC* IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 132, 323a), 323b). Under Septimius Severus and Caracalla types displaying the legend *ADVENTVS AVGG/AVGVSTOR* together with an image of a galley were struck: *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 178a) and 178b); *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 57, 58, 120, 121; see above p. 72.

¹⁴⁰ These coin types are dated to 241–243 (*RIC* IV.3, Gordianus III, no. 132) or possibly to late 242 (*RIC* IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 323a) and 323b).

¹⁴¹ The majority of these coin types are dated before the first campaign in Britain started and might thus refer to the passage to the East. On the campaigns in Britain, see Birley, *Septimius Severus*, pp. 170–187. On the dates of both campaigns, see Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle*, pp. 156–157.

A large number of Decius' coin types mentions the legions responsible for putting Decius on the imperial throne.¹⁴² They bear either the legend GENIVS EXERCITVS ILLVRICIANI together with a depiction of Genius or the legend EXERCITVS INLVRICVS (*sic*) accompanying an image of Fides.¹⁴³ These coin types probably reflect an effort of the emperor to secure and honor his original power base or to advertise their support, or both.¹⁴⁴

Gallienus glorified the *cohors tertia praetoria* and stamped COHORT PRAET PRINCIPI SVO onto his coins.¹⁴⁵ These slogans probably aimed to advertise the support of the praetorian guard, the division of the armed forces that was the nearest and therefore the most dangerous to the emperor, and therefore to propagate the emperor's legitimacy.¹⁴⁶ Additionally, Gallienus' coins propagated loyalty of the *equites* and the praetorian guard as well as harmony within the *equites*.¹⁴⁷

The most exceptional references to specific military units in the third century are the legionary series minted by Septimius Severus and Gallienus.¹⁴⁸ Each coin type belonging to these series propagated a specific legion by incorporating the name of the legion into the legend. The images on all legionary types of Septimius Severus are identical: a legionary eagle between two military standards. Although the majority of images on the legionary series of Gallienus represent the same notion, they are not all identical; different images (various animals, deities, centaurs, Victoria, the she-wolf suckling Remus and Romulus) signify whichever particular legion is named in the legend.¹⁴⁹ Nevertheless, the legionary series of both Septimius Severus and Gallienus must have been designed to declare the

¹⁴² *CIL* III 4558. See below, pp. 256–257.

¹⁴³ GENIVS EXERCITVS ILLVRICIANI: *RIC* IV.3, Decius, nos. 3a), 3b), 4a), 4b), 16a), 16b), 16c), 17a), 17b), 18, 39a), 39b), 40, 103, 104a), 104b), 105a), 105b), 105c), 105d), 117a), 117b), 117c), 117d), 117e), 118a), 118b), 118c), 119a), 119b). EXERCITVS INLVRICVS (*sic*): *RIC* IV.3, Decius, nos. 102a), 102b), 102c), 102d).

¹⁴⁴ See also p. 68 and pp. 256–257.

¹⁴⁵ CHORS TERTIA PRAETORIA: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 7. COHORT PRAET PRINCIPI SVO: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 417.

¹⁴⁶ See below, pp. 279–280 and 282

¹⁴⁷ FIDEI EQVITVM: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 33, 34, 35, 445, 446. FID/FIDEI PRAET: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 36, 37, 476, 568, 569. CONCOR EQVIT: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 472.

¹⁴⁸ *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 345a), 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369.

¹⁴⁹ See below, pp. 278–279.

specific legions' loyalty to the emperor.¹⁵⁰ That the legionary series were minted during the reigns of these two emperors is not surprising. The legionary coins of Septimius Severus were minted in the period 193–194. In these years Severus fought to obtain and safeguard his sole rule against Didius Julianus, Pescennius Niger, and Clodius Albinus.¹⁵¹ During this civil strife, winning and securing support of the legions was vital; 'because he became emperor by military force, Severus was perhaps compelled to rely more openly on the support of his troops (...)'.¹⁵² The legionary series minted under Gallienus can be dated to 257–259. In this period, Gallienus was waging war in the Rhine area and there was a constant threat of invasions.¹⁵³ Gallienus needed his legions' support badly and legitimizing his power was crucial. Minting coins on which the support of individual legions was advertised could help to achieve this objective. Thus, especially Severus' and Gallienus' legionary series, but also the other third-century types that refer to specific military units, mirror the emperor's dependence on his troops in a period full of severe internal and external military strife.

¹⁵⁰ See p. 279.

¹⁵¹ Cass. Dio 74.14.3–74.15.3.

¹⁵² Campbell, *The Emperor and the Roman Army*, p. 372.

¹⁵³ See p. 274. See also De Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus*, p. 6 and Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle*, p. 215.

CHAPTER THREE

DIVINE PROPAGANDA

However good be our conceit of ourselves, conscript fathers, we have excelled neither Spain in population, nor Gaul in vigour, nor Carthage in versatility, nor Greece in art, nor indeed Italy and Latium itself in the innate sensibility characteristic of this land and its peoples; but in piety, in devotion to religion, and in that special wisdom which consists in the recognition of the truth that the world is swayed and directed by divine disposal, we have excelled every race and every nation.¹

Cicero is only one of the many ancient writers who assert that Romans considered religion to be highly important. By means of the attention paid to 'religious matters', coins demonstrate a similar emphasis. Imperial coins indicate furthermore that divinities played a prominent role in the representation of Roman imperial power. In his article on imperial virtues, Noreña divides the reverse types of Roman imperial coinage into five categories; 1) personifications, 2) gods, goddesses and minor deities, 3) inanimate objects and miscellaneous scenes, 4) depictions of the emperor and various members of the imperial family, and 5) provinces, cities and rivers. Personifications were the most common reverse types, followed by gods, goddesses, and minor deities.² Thus, besides the importance attached to personifications, paying attention to gods seems to have carried great significance in the Roman Empire.³ Especially in times of crisis, both during the Republic and Empire, deities played an important

¹ Cicero, *De Haruspicum Responsis* 9.19: *Quam volumus licet, patres conscripti, ipsi nos amemus, tamen nec numero Hispanos nec robore Gallos nec calliditate Poenos nec artibus Graecos nec denique hoc ipso huius gentis ac terrae domestico nativoque sensu Italos ipsos ac Latinos, sed pietate ac religione atque hac una sapientia, quod deorum numine omnia regi gubernarique perspeximus, omnes gentes nationesque superavimus.*

² Noreña, "The communication of the emperor's virtues", pp. 153–154. By minor deities Noreña understands for example the Genius and the hero Hercules (see p. 154 n. 41). I have taken either 'gods' or 'deities' or 'divinities' as a collective term designating the category gods, goddesses, and minor deities.

³ On the difference between gods and personifications, see p. 97.

role on coinage. Many coin types that first appeared during the devastating period of the Second Punic War display images of prominent Roman deities such as Jupiter and Minerva.⁴ Likewise, members of the Roman pantheon (such as Jupiter, Mars, Ceres and Vesta) were prominent on the coin types struck during the short reigns of Otho and Vitellius in the year of the four emperors.⁵

In the turbulent third century, the representation of deities on coins likewise reached a high proportion. Yet, in contrast to the attention paid to gods on coins, the image of the emperor as *sacerdos* is less common on third-century coinage. However, both references to gods and the representation of the emperor as a priest constitute 'divine association' (the connection of the emperor and his reign with the divine as represented on coins)⁶ which forms an essential part of the representation of imperial power in general. Imperial coinage frequently emphasizes the emperor as elected by the gods, the assistance deities offered in state affairs, and the piety of the ruler; such a visual program was communicated to a broad audience and presumably intended to make the inhabitants of the Roman Empire believe that the emperor was predestined to rule. Furthermore, images of gods and of the emperor in his priestly function presented favored gods and the head of Roman state religion to the Roman people.⁷

It is easy to see the correlation between divine association and representation of power in retrospect. But would Roman subjects, the viewers, have considered these images on coins also as images of power? When represented dressed and/or acting as a priest, the emperor wanted to be seen as fulfilling a particular role. Yet, it might not be wholly obvious why the appearance of gods or legends such as PROVIDENTIA DEORVM on the reverses of coins would affect their understanding of the representation of imperial power. Yet the emperor, who is always depicted on the obverse, and the message on the reverse exhibit a reciprocal relationship.⁸ It is

⁴ See *BMCRE* I, pp. 45–65.

⁵ See *RIC* I, Otho and Vitellius. Noteworthy in this respect is that only on the lower denominations of Galba's coinage deities were put forward. See Hekster "Coins and messages", pp. 26–27.

⁶ For a description of the category 'divine association' and the criteria used for dividing coin types into this category see chapter one (table 2).

⁷ Some emperors also used divine association for self-glorification, for instance by identifying themselves with a deity (like Commodus did with Hercules, see Hekster, *Commodus*).

⁸ Concerning a group of six coins minted under Augustus for instance, C. King points out that 'each obverse is meant to be seen as interacting with its own reverse (...)'. See King, "Roman portraiture: images of power?", p. 129.

therefore plausible that Roman viewers connected the emperor actively with the propaganda communicated on the reverse of the coin.⁹

This chapter investigates the most frequent form of divine association (references to deities) and the form of divine association which gives evidence of the clearest connection between the imperial power and the divine (the emperor as *sacerdos*). The emphasis lies on the frequency of references to both forms of divine association and, in the case of the representation of gods, on the different roles the deities played throughout the third century. However, before turning attention to both gods and emperors represented as priests, third-century divine association in general will be discussed, so that diachronic developments in the representation of the gods and of the emperor as *sacerdos* may be understood in the proper contexts. Finally, some peculiarities with regard to third-century divine association in the third century will be dealt with (such as Elagabalus and his predilection for the Syrian deity Elagabal as well as the prominent position of Sol during Aurelian's reign).

With regard to the concept 'god' (or 'deity'), I distinguish between a god and a deified personification (such as Victoria, Fides, Fortuna).¹⁰ By personifications 'human figures that gave visual shape and concrete embodiment to a wide range of abstract ideas' are meant.¹¹ Although almost every personification received cultic honours and was, therefore, a deity, here they are considered 'impersonal narrowly prescribed functional godheads'. The Olympians, on the other hand, are understood as 'personalized multifaceted gods'.¹² This contrast between 'gods' and 'personifications' can be illustrated by the functional difference between, for example, Victoria and Mars; whereas Victoria embodies solely victory, Mars not only played an important role in the imperial theology of victory and as god of war, he also protected the fields and animals of an agrarian estate.¹³

In this chapter five multifaceted deities are discussed: Jupiter, Hercules, Mars, Sol, and Apollo.¹⁴ Of all Roman and foreign deities, these five gods were referred to by most third-century emperors on their coinage; 20 emperors reigning in the third century referred to Jupiter on their coins,

⁹ See A. Wallace-Hadrill, "Image and authority in the coinage of Augustus".

¹⁰ In this, I follow Noreña, "The communication of the emperor's virtues", p. 153.

¹¹ Noreña, "The communication of the emperor's virtues", p. 153.

¹² J.R. Fears, "The cult of virtues and Roman imperial ideology", *ANRW* II 17.2 (1981), pp. 827–948; p. 840.

¹³ On Mars, see pp. 115–121.

¹⁴ For an overview of the representation of Jupiter, Mars and other masculine deities on coins issued in the period 161–235, see F. Chausson, "VEL IOVI VEL SOLI: quatre études autour de la vigna Barberini (191–354)", *MÉFRA* 107.2 (1995), pp. 661–765; pp. 729–737.

12 to Hercules, 26 to Mars, 18 to Sol, and 14 to Apollo.¹⁵ Other deities (Aesculapius, Cabirus, Ceres, Dea Caelestis, Diana/Luna, Elagabal, Isis, Janus, Juno, Liber/Bacchus, Mercury, Minerva, Neptune, Ops, Pluto, Saturn, Serapis, Venus, Vesta, Vulcan) were less popular in this particular period.¹⁶

Jupiter and Hercules also belonged to the core of the Tetrarchic ideology. By means of an investigation of the attention paid to Jupiter and Hercules on third-century coinage, it might be possible to shed some light on the question of whether the prominence of these two deities can be understood as a Tetrarchic innovation or whether the third-century emperors laid a foundation for this divine prominence.¹⁷ In addition, the presence of Mars, the war god, on coins might underscore the military character of the third century. After all, the third century was a period characterized by all sorts of military activities (e.g. wars beyond the borders of the Roman Empire, internal strife, the army's role in choosing and rejecting emperors). The attention paid to military themes on coins confirms this picture (see chapter two). Is it possible to infer a military character for a period from the presence of Mars on the coinage? The prominence of the fourth god discussed in this chapter, Sol, is a novelty on third-century coins. Before Septimius Severus' reign, Sol hardly appeared on imperial coins. From Septimius Severus onward, the presence of Sol on coinage became more frequent. The worship of the god peaked during Aurelian's emperorship; 23.6% of Aurelian's coin types contain references to Sol.¹⁸ After Aurelian held sway over the Empire, Sol remained important in imperial ideology up to and including Constantine's reign. The third century can thus be seen as crucial in establishing the sun god's significance to the center of power. Apollo, also but not only a sun god, is the last deity discussed in this chapter. By the agency of Augustus, Apollo's importance in Roman ideology had increased.¹⁹ What was his position in the third century, and did the two sun gods, Sol and Apollo, interact?

¹⁵ See appendix two. Since this chapter deals with *all* references to Jupiter, Hercules, Mars, Sol, and Apollo, this appendix includes the *RIC* numbers of *all* coin types referring to these five deities (thus not solely coin types that belong to the representational category 'divine association', see above, p. 52).

¹⁶ See appendix three. This appendix includes the *RIC* numbers of *all* coin types referring to 'less popular' deities (thus not solely coin types that belong to the representational category 'divine association', see p. 52).

¹⁷ See for example S. Williams, *Diocletian and the Roman Recovery* (New York and London, 1985), pp. 58–59; R. Rees, *Diocletian and the Tetrarchy* (Edinburgh, 2004), pp. 6–7 and 54–57.

¹⁸ On Aurelian's predilection for Sol, see pp. 150–154.

¹⁹ J. Gagé, *Apollon Romain. Essai sur le Culte d'Apollon et le développement du "ritus Graecus" à Rome des origines à Auguste* (Paris, 1955), pp. 479–637. For more on this, see

1. THE GENERAL PICTURE

In the third century A.D., a chaotic period in many respects, messages concerning divine association figured prominently on coins; as we can see in figure 18, they circulated, to a higher or to a lower extent, during almost every reign in the third century. In general, more fluctuations are visible in the percentages of coin types that emphasize divine association in the first half of the third century, whereas the proportion of coin types exhibiting divine association in the second half of the century is more stable.²⁰ Nevertheless, this kind of representation seems to have been a matter of great interest to the center of power between 193 and 284.

Although religiously tinged coins circulated frequently in the third century, not all third-century emperors seem to have taken part in this. Didius Julianus, Diadumenian, Gordian II and Saloninus did not connect their reigns with the divine or display themselves as *sacerdos* on their coins. The emperors' premature deaths could be responsible for this; they all died within a short period of time after being appointed as Augustus. Didius Julianus, the first emperor who 'bought' the Roman Empire, was executed after a reign of 66 days.²¹ Diadumenian was made co-emperor in 218 and was murdered soon after his elevation to the rank of Augustus.²² Gordian II died three weeks after his proclamation as emperor while trying to defend Carthage against troops loyal to Maximinus Thrax.²³ Saloninus died within a few weeks or months after his accession at the hands of Postumus.²⁴ Taking these premature deaths into consideration, it seems obvious that only a small number of different coin types were produced during these short reigns and that, apparently, divine association was not first priority in these instances.

However, this seems not to be true for all reigns of short-lived emperors. After all, the reigns of the emperors named above were not exceptional in

M.J. Strazzulla, *Il principato di Apollo* (Rome, 1990) and R. Gurval, *Actium and Augustus: the Politics and Emotions of Civil War* (Ann Arbor, 1995), pp. 90ff.

²⁰ The mean percentage for the period Pertinax-Decius is 17.5% with a standard deviation of 15.6%. The mean percentage for the period Herennius Etruscus-Numerian is 17.3% with a standard deviation of 10.2%.

²¹ Cass. Dio 74.17.5. See further Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle*, p. 154.

²² On the elevation of Diadumenian to the rank of Augustus, see Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle*, p. 171. On Diadumenian's death, see Cass. Dio 79.40.5; Herodian 5.4.12; H.A. Macrinus 10.3.

²³ Herodian 7.9.2–11. Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle*, p. 190.

²⁴ Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle*, p. 221; Potter, *The Roman Empire at Bay*, p. 260. For more on Saloninus' coinage, see N. Shiel, "The coinage of Saloninus as Augustus", *ANS-MusN* 24 (1979), pp. 117–122.

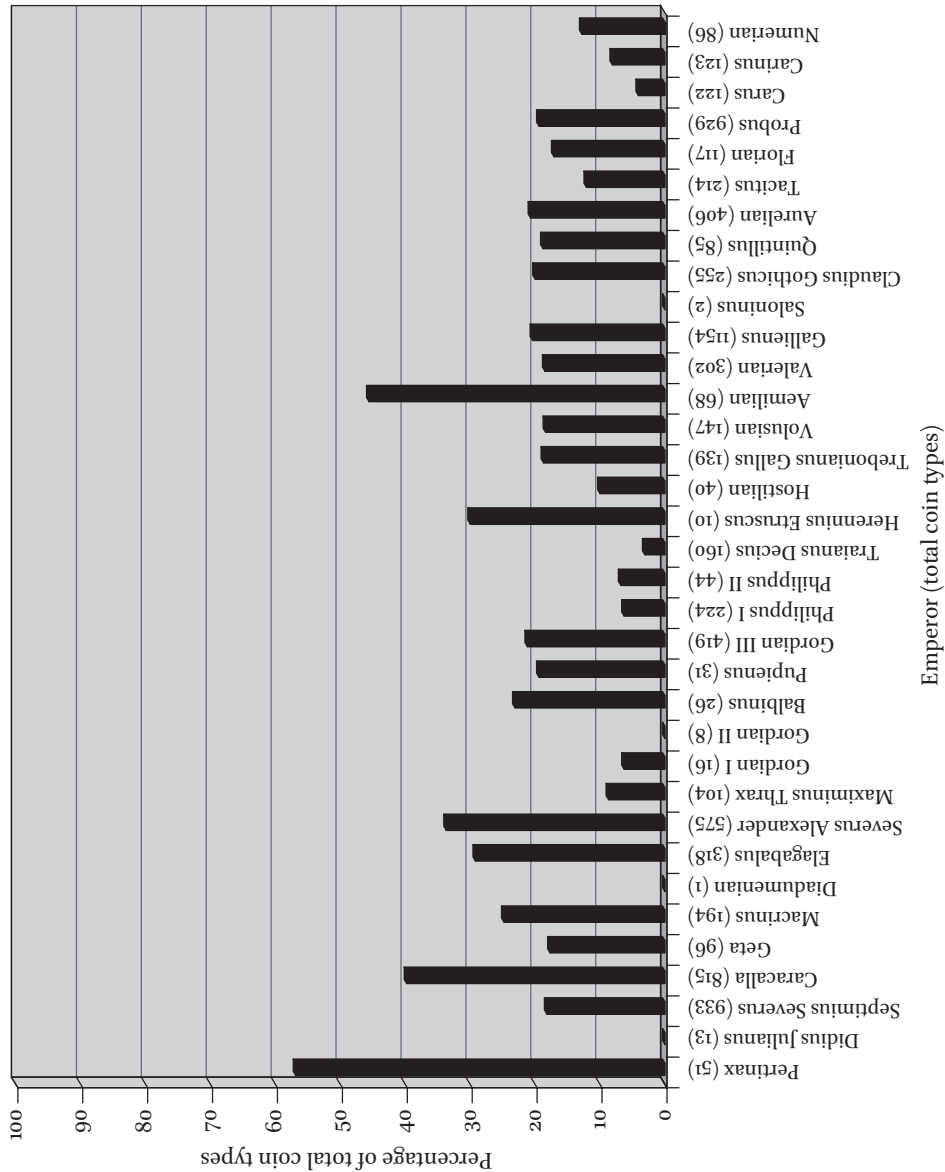


Figure 18 Proportions of coin types propagating 'divine association' per emperor

terms of brevity. Gordian I, Balbinus, Pupienus, Herennius Etruscus and Hostilian had equally short reigns and a low number of coin types (that is less than 40), yet, in contrast to the coins of Didius Julianus, Diadumenian, Gordian II and Saloninus, their coinage displayed some divine association.²⁵

Other numismatic evidence shows that a short reign (varying from a few weeks to one year) did not necessarily generate a small number of coin types. In the cases of Pertinax, Aemilian, Quintillus, Tacitus, Florian, Carus and Numerian, the opposite is true. Especially the coinage of Tacitus and Florian, both emperors for less than half a year, was large and full of optimistic messages. Nonetheless, the percentage of divine association on the coins of these seven emperors varied.²⁶

Since, apparently, the reign's length did not necessarily affect the propagation of divine messages, the lack of types propagating divine association in the cases of the aforementioned emperors has to be explained otherwise. It seems, then, that a lack of types propagating divine association has a connection with different imperial preferences. The mean percentage of third-century divine association lies at 15.8%. During the reigns of Pertinax, Caracalla, Elagabalus, Severus Alexander, Herennius Etruscus and Aemilian, peaks can be discerned.²⁷ Caracalla's high percentage of coins bearing a religious theme corresponds to Dio's statement that this emperor was the most pious of all mankind, whereas the large number of coins propagating divine association under Elagabalus' reign matches with his extraordinary worship of the Syrian deity Elagabal and the emperor's role as the god's highest priestly servant.²⁸ Severus Alexander reversed Elagabalus' religious alterations and reinstalled Jupiter as chief god. It is therefore not strange that divine association played such a prominent role on his coins; after Elagabalus' religious innovations, he probably wanted to emphasize the traditional Roman gods and his relation toward them.²⁹ The lowest percentages can be found under Maximinus

²⁵ In chronological order (here and in the following notes): Gordian I: 6.3%; Balbinus: 23.1%; Pupienus: 19.4%; Herennius Etruscus: 30%; Hostilian: 10%. The coin types referring to Hostilian as Augustus were struck under Trebonianus Gallus.

²⁶ Pertinax: 56.9%; Aemilian: 45.6%; Quintillus: 18.8%; Tacitus: 12.1%; Florian: 17.1%; Carus: 4.1%; Numerian: 12.8%.

²⁷ Pertinax: 56.9%; Caracalla: 39.8%; Elagabalus: 29.2%; Severus Alexander: 33.7%; Herennius Etruscus: 30%; Aemilian: 45.6%.

²⁸ Cass. Dio 78.16.1 (ἔτι λέγων εὐσεβέστατος πάντων ἀνθρώπων εἶναι). On Caracalla's piety, see further p. 228 with n. 16. On Elagabalus and his priestly status, see pp. 146–149.

²⁹ For a comparison between Elagabalus' and Severus Alexander's 'religious' coins, see E. Manders, "Religion and coinage. Heliogabalus and Alexander Severus: two extremes?", *Talanta* 36–37 (2004–2005), pp. 123–138.

Thrax, Gordian I, Philippus I and II, Decius, Hostilian, Carus and Carinus.³⁰ Coinage from the reign of Maximinus Thrax, which was characterized by military campaigns (see chapter two), stressed military representation. The coin types of Philippus I show a profound interest in promoting *saeculum aureum* (see chapter five). This could possibly be connected with the thousandth anniversary of Rome, celebrated during Philippus' emperorship.³¹ The focus on Decius' coins lies on the provinces of Dacia and Pannonia as well as on the Illyrian legions (see chapter seven). Thus, although in general divine association played an important role on third-century coinage, it seems that the emperors decided individually how much emphasis they lay on this form of representation on their own coins.

2. JUPITER³²

Representation of Jupiter on third-century coins (*image 4*) by means of a legend, an image, or both was more common in the latter part of the third century (see figure 19). Before the reign of Aemilian, the connection between the deity of the sky, chief god of the Roman pantheon, and the emperor seemed to have been more incidental and subject to heavier fluctuations. The large peak that appears for Macrinus' reign could possibly imply that this ruler appealed strongly to the chief god in order to legitimize his position as the first equestrian Roman emperor. The low percentage of coin types referring to Jupiter that were minted under Elagabalus must reflect the decreasing importance that the latter emperor attached to the chief god in favor of the Syrian solar deity Elagabal. Fourteen emperors reigning in the period 193–253 did not pay any attention to Jupiter on their coins. The coinages of five of them, Pertinax, Didius Julianus, Diadumenian, Gordian I and Gordian II, do not display Olympian deities at all, only deified personifications, which explains the omission of Jupiter. In addition, coins of Geta, Maximinus Thrax, Philippus I, Philippus II, Decius, Decius' sons, Trebonianus Gallus and Volusian publicize images of only a limited number of deities.³³ Since more important Olympians

³⁰ Maximinus Thrax: 8.7%; Gordian I: 6.3%; Philippus I: 6.3%; Philippus II: 6.8%; Decius: 3.1%; Hostilian: 10%; Carus: 4.1%; Carinus: 8.1%.

³¹ On the thousandth anniversary of Rome, see H.A. The Three Gordians 33.1–2 and *Epitome de Caesaribus* 28.3. See also above, pp. 21–22.

³² Not all coin types with references to Jupiter belong to the category 'divine association'. However, all coin types referring to Jupiter are included in this section. See above, p. 52.

³³ Although only three deities figure on Gallus' and Volusian' coins (Apollo, Iuno Martialis, Mars), respectively 15.8% and 15% of these emperors' coins display these three deities.

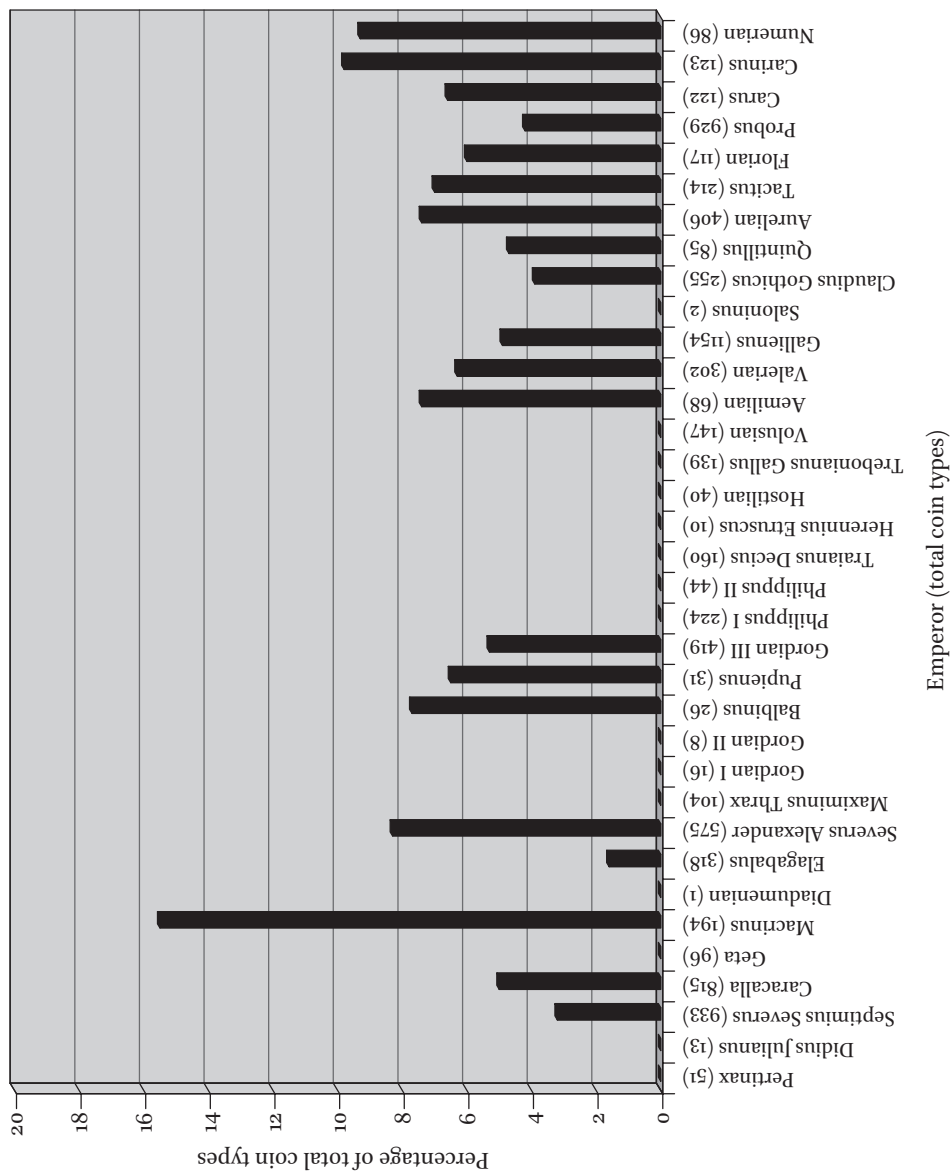


Figure 19 Proportions of coin types referring to Jupiter per emperor



Image 4 Jupiter Conservator (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 76)

lack on the coins of these nine emperors, the absence of the chief god is not striking in itself.

Whereas the emperors reigning in the first half of the third century did not seem unequivocal in giving Jupiter a place on their coins, coin types representing the supreme god became more frequent from 253 onward. Only Saloninus, who issued two coin types during the period in which he was Augustus, did not put the chief god on his coins. Apparently, the tendency, which culminated in the Tetrarchic practice of attributing the most important place in the Roman pantheon to Jupiter, set in during the second half of the third century. That the Tetrarchs favored Jupiter more than other gods can also be derived from their coinage; from the beginning of Diocletian's reign onward, Jupiter figured most prominently on his coins.³⁴ Moreover, Diocletian's adoption of the *signum* 'Iovius' provides the most decisive proof for Jupiter's eminent position during Tetrarchic rule and launched a new step in claiming divine support.³⁵ But as the graph demonstrates, the third-century emperors from Aemilian onward seem to have paved the way.

When we look at the contents of the references to Jupiter, we can discern some patterns; the supreme god's imperial investiture and assistance to the emperor were persistent themes and appear repeatedly on third-century imperial coinage. The propagation of imperial investiture by Jupiter goes back to Domitian's reign. During his emperorship a Jovian theology of imperial power was incorporated into the official imperial ideology. This theology was elaborated further during the second and third

³⁴ Rees, *Diocletian and the Tetrarchy*, p. 54.

³⁵ On *signum* see: R. Rees, "The emperor's new names" in: L. Rawlings and H. Bowden eds., *Herakles and Hercules. Exploring a Graeco-Roman Divinity* (Swansea, 2005), pp. 223–239.

centuries and encompasses the imperial investiture by the supreme god: the emperor was appointed by Jupiter and acted as his 'vice-regent' on earth.³⁶ In this way, the divine support for the emperor's reign was publicized. The election of the emperor by Jupiter emerges on coins by means of Jupiter presenting the globe, symbol of sovereignty, to the emperor.³⁷

Although Septimius Severus, the founder of a new dynasty, appealed mainly to the gods of his hometown (Lepcis Magna), namely Hercules (in the guise of Melquart) and Liber, he obviously needed Jupiter's support in the legitimization of his new rule as well.³⁸ However, after the first year of Septimius Severus' reign, coin types on which Jupiter handed over his *insignia* of power to the emperor disappeared for some time.³⁹ During Valerian's and Gallienus' joint emperorship these images returned on Gallienus' coins.⁴⁰ In addition, Aurelian,⁴¹ Tacitus,⁴² Probus,⁴³ Carus,⁴⁴ Carinus,⁴⁵

³⁶ J.R. Fears, "The cult of Jupiter and Roman imperial ideology", *ANRW* II 17.1 (1981), pp. 3–141. Fears argues that 'the central role of Jupiter in the imperial ideology of the Antonine Age was not a mere political fabrication devoid of any real religious feeling' (p. 100). By saying this, he seems to apply a Christian way of thinking to Roman religion which is, in my view, not justified. On 'christianizing assumptions', see S.R.F. Price, *Rituals and Power. The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge, 1984), pp. 11–15.

³⁷ Imagery on which Jupiter is handing over a globe to the emperor occurred for the first time on coins of Domitian and was also used by Trajan and Hadrian. The imperial investiture by Jupiter could also be communicated by other media. For example, Pliny presents Trajan in his *Panegyricus* (Pliny, *Panegyricus* 1) as chosen by Jupiter and a panel on the arch of Beneventum shows an image of Trajan receiving a thunderbolt from Jupiter (D. Kleiner, *Roman Sculpture* (New Haven and London, 1992), pp. 227–228).

³⁸ J.R. Fears, *Princeps a diis electus: The Divine Election of the Emperor as a Political Concept at Rome* (Rome, 1977), p. 262. On Hercules/Melquart and Liber/Bacchus in the ideology of Severus and his family, see Lichtenberger, *Severus Pius Augustus*, pp. 27–99.

³⁹ Jupiter's election of the emperor on Septimius Severus' coins: *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, no. 35.

⁴⁰ *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 440. Fears argues that the type portraying the emperor's investiture by Jupiter returned on the coinage of Gallienus' sole reign (Fears, "The cult of Jupiter and Roman imperial ideology", p. 116). However, no proof for this claim can be found in the *RIC*, in which only types of this kind are attested for Gallienus' joint reign.

⁴¹ *RIC* V.1, Aurelian, nos. 48, 129, 130, 131, 132, 174, 225, 226, 227, 228, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 342, 344, 346, 394, 395.

⁴² *RIC* V.1, Tacitus, nos. 16, 17, 54, 133, 134, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 210, 211, 212, 213.

⁴³ *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 856, 857, 858, 859, 905, 920, 921, 927, 928.

⁴⁴ *RIC* V.2, Carus, nos. 118, 123, 124, 125, 128. Concerning no. 128, it is hard to distinguish whether the figure handing over the globe is Jupiter or Carus' son Carinus. The latter seems a bit strange; transferring the globe by an emperor into the hands of his son (and hereby passing the rule to his son) is more natural than the other way round.

⁴⁵ *RIC* V.2, Carinus, nos. 314, 314a, 325, 326, 327, 329. Concerning nos. 325, 326, 327, and 329, sometimes the globe is omitted and only Victoria is handed over to the emperor. Moreover, it is hard to distinguish whether the figure on these types who hands over a

and Numerian⁴⁶ used imagery displaying Jupiter handing over a globe to the emperor.

The other theme, the aid that Jupiter offered to the emperor, is represented on third-century coinage in two ways; we can see on the one hand a majority of the coin legends referring to the aid Jupiter offered in military matters (such as IOVI VICTORI, IOVI VLTORI, IOVI STATORI, IOVI INVICTO, IOVI PROPVGNATORI) and on the other hand legends emphasizing the god's protective function (that is IOVI CONSERVATORI).⁴⁷

As for Jupiter's aid in military matters, the types bearing the legend IOVI VICTORI and IOVI STATORI dominate the third-century coin types.⁴⁸ Jupiter Victor is invoked as the bestower of victory upon the armed forces on the coins of Septimius Severus, Elagabalus, Valerian, Gallienus, Claudius Gothicus, Quintillus, Aurelian, Florian, Carus, Carinus, and Numerian.⁴⁹ While Jupiter Victor offers the soldiers help in achieving a military victory, Jupiter Stator provides the armies with perseverance in times of military crisis. As tutelary deity of the army, Jupiter Stator gained significance in the third century; from 222 onward, nine emperors put references to Jupiter Stator on their coins.⁵⁰ The Jupiter Victor and Jupiter Stator types, struck in the reigns of many emperors, strongly connote martial success; the types refer probably to the military problems present during the whole third century.

globe or Victoria (and a globe) is Jupiter or Carinus' father and predecessor Carus. In my view, Jupiter is more likely, because the figure seems to be naked.

⁴⁶ *RIC* V.2, Numerianus, nos. 463, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470. It is hard to distinguish whether the figure handing over the globe on all these types is Jupiter or Numerian's father and predecessor Carus, see previous note.

⁴⁷ Coins bearing the legend IOVI VLTORI appeared for the first time on coins of Commodus. In the third century they were minted solely by Severus Alexander and Gallienus, see Chausson, "VEL IOVI VEL SOLI", p. 718. The few coins with the legend IOVI SOSPITATORI are not included here.

⁴⁸ Jupiter, highest god of the state, was also the highest god of the army at the same time, see S. Hobbald, *Das Bild des Mars. Untersuchung zum römischen Kriegsgott* (Diss. Bonn, 1995), p. 16.

⁴⁹ IOVI VICTORI: *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 204, 272, 441B, 454; *RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, no. 92; *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, nos. 7, 8; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 21, 22, 23; *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 6, 53, 54, 55, 124; *RIC* V.1, Quintillus, no. 21; *RIC* V.1, Aurelian, nos. 49, 269; *RIC* V.1, Florianus, no. 19; *RIC* V.2, Carus, nos. 38, 39, 40; *RIC* V.2, Carinus, nos. 257, 258, 259, 260; *RIC* V.2, Numerianus, nos. 409, 410.

⁵⁰ M. Schuol, "Die paganen Religionen", in: Johne, Hartmann and Gerhardt, *Die Zeit der Soldatenkaiser*, pp. 927–935; p. 928. IOVI STATORI: *RIC* IV.2, Severus Alexander, no. 202; *RIC* IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 84, 85, 99, 100, 112, 118, 298a), 298b), 298c), 299a), 299b); *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, no. 95; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 49, 50, 109, 216, 217, 218, 219, 488, 644, 645; *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 52, 130; *RIC* V.1, Aurelian, nos. 267, 268, 333; *RIC* V.1, Tacitus, no. 88; *RIC* V.1, Florianus, nos. 32, 117; *RIC* V.2, Probus, no. 152.

Jupiter's protective function accentuates coins bearing IOVI CONSERVATORI legends. Eighteen emperors put IOVI CONSERVATORI on their coinage.⁵¹ In the cases of Macrinus, Severus Alexander, Gordian III, Aemilian, Gallienus, Claudius Gothicus, Quintillus and Aurelian, the emperor is depicted next to Jupiter on the reverses. Most often the emperor appears smaller than the supreme deity and/or Jupiter is extending his hand to him or holding the thunderbolt over him. This communicates the subordinate position of the emperor in comparison with Jupiter, as well as the emperor's dependence on the supreme ruler in heaven.⁵²

The above described kinds of Jupiter's assistance mirror the emperor's dependence on Jupiter, and for this reason they differ fundamentally from the coins representing Jupiter as imperial elector, which emphasize the 'partnership of rule'.⁵³ Sometimes, of course, these themes overlap. Not all coin types referring to the supreme god, however, fit into this artificially constructed scheme. Gallienus issued a coin type devoted to IO CANTAB.⁵⁴ Why this coin type, minted in Siscia (that is in modern Croatia), referred to a Spanish people (the Cantabri), is unclear. Jupiter's epithet *creescens*, visible on Gallienus' coin bearing the legend IOVI CRESCENTI, seems to refer to the dawning of golden age.⁵⁵ The legend IOVI FVLGERAT can be found on a coin type issued by Claudius Gothicus and refers to Jupiter in the capacity of weather god.⁵⁶

⁵¹ IOVI CONSERVATORI: *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 111A, 130, 504A; *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 301; *RIC* IV.2, Macrinus, nos. 71–77, 185–192; *RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, nos. 89–91; *RIC* IV.2, Severus Alexander, nos. 140, 141, 197–200, 558, 559; *RIC* IV.2, Balbinus, nos. 2, 13; *RIC* IV.2, Pupienus, nos. 2, 12; *RIC* IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 2, 8, 50, 136, 211, 255a), 255b); *RIC* IV.3, Aemilianus, nos. 4, 14, 45, 46, 57; *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, nos. 37–40, 92–94, 143, 146, 147, 162, 163, 194, 195; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 76, 77, 143, 189, 215–218, 440; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 47, 107, 207–212, 384, 486, 487, 608, 614, 641; *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 152, 211; *RIC* V.1, Quintillus, nos. 57, 84, 85; *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, nos. 48, 129–132, 174, 225–228, 259–266, 274, 275, 346, 394, 395; *RIC* V.1, Florianus, nos. 68–71; *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 172–176, 315, 384–391; *RIC* V.2, Carinus, no. 314.

⁵² Septimius Severus' coin type bearing the legend IOVI PRAE ORBIS (*RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, no. 396) and Gallienus' coin type with IOVI PATRI (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 642) refer to the supreme power of Jupiter as well, but do not show the emperor's dependence on Jupiter as on the IOVI CONSERVATORI coins.

⁵³ Partnership of rule: Fears, *Princeps a diis electus*, p. 270.

⁵⁴ *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 573.

⁵⁵ *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 20. See further chapter eight, p. 284 n. 70.

⁵⁶ *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, no. 51. On Jupiter Fulgurator, see G. Alföldy, "Die Krise des Imperium Romanum und die Religion Roms", in: W. Eck ed., *Religion und Gesellschaft in der Römischen Kaiserzeit. Kolloquium zu Ehren von Friedrich Vittinghoff* (Vienna, 1989), pp. 53–102; p. 87.

3. HERCULES⁵⁷

Alongside Jupiter, Hercules occupied an important place within the Tetrarchic ideology. Hercules appeared regularly on coins from 285 onward, *inter alia* as *comes*, *conservator* and *victor*. Moreover, while Diocletian adopted the *signum* 'Iovius', Maximian assumed the *signum* 'Herculius'; together with his divine father, Hercules acted as patron of the Tetrarchic rule.⁵⁸

This remarkable attention to Hercules from the Tetrarchs could be characterized as the last triumph of the Roman Hercules.⁵⁹ During the Empire, the first triumph was brought about by Trajan, who gave Hercules the function of upholder of emperor and Empire, especially with regard to military affairs.⁶⁰ Commodus dragged the emperor's predilection for Hercules even further and identified himself with the god. Eventually, by relating themselves to Jupiter and Hercules, the Tetrarchs claimed 'some divine agency'.⁶¹ Herein, however, Jupiter was superior to Hercules just as Diocletian was superior to Maximian:

All these things you [Maximian] accepted when offered them by your best of brothers [Diocletian]: in this you acted courageously, he wisely. Nor did you put your helping hand to the tiller when a favoring breeze impelled the ship of state from the stern, but when only divine help was sufficient for its restoration after its collapse in former times, and not even the help of one god sufficed; you came to the aid of the Roman name, as it faltered, at the side of the leader, with that same timely assistance as your Hercules once lent to your Jupiter, when he was beset with difficulties in his war with the Earthborn. Hercules then gained a great part of the victory, and proved that he had not so much received heaven from the gods as restored it to them.⁶²

⁵⁷ Not all coin types with references to Hercules belong to the category 'divine association'. However, all coin types referring to Hercules are included in this section. See above, p. 52. On Hercules as a model for the ideal king, see Dio Chrysostom, *Peri Basileias* 1.58–84.

⁵⁸ See Rees, "The emperor's new names", pp. 223–39.

⁵⁹ M. Jaczynowska, "Le culte de l'Hercule romain au temps du Haut-Empire", *ANRW II* 17.2 (1981), pp. 631–661; p. 641.

⁶⁰ Jaczynowska, "Le culte de l'Hercule romain", p. 637. See further O. Hekster, "Propagating power. Hercules as an example for second-century emperors" in: Rawlings and Bowden, *Herakles and Hercules*, pp. 205–221.

⁶¹ Rees, *Diocletian and the Tetrarchy*, p. 55.

⁶² *Panegyrici Latini* X(II).4.2: *Haec omnia cum a fratre optimo oblata suscepis, tu fecisti fortiter ille sapienter. Neque enim cum rei publicae navem secundus a puppi flatus impelleret, salutare manum gubernaculis addidisti, sed cum ad restituendam eam post priorum temporum labem divinum modo ac ne id quidem unicum sufficeret auxilium, praecipitanti Romano nomini iuxta principem subiusti eadem scilicet auxilii opportunitate qua tuus Hercules Iovem vestrum quondam Terrigenarum bello laborantem magna victoriae parte*

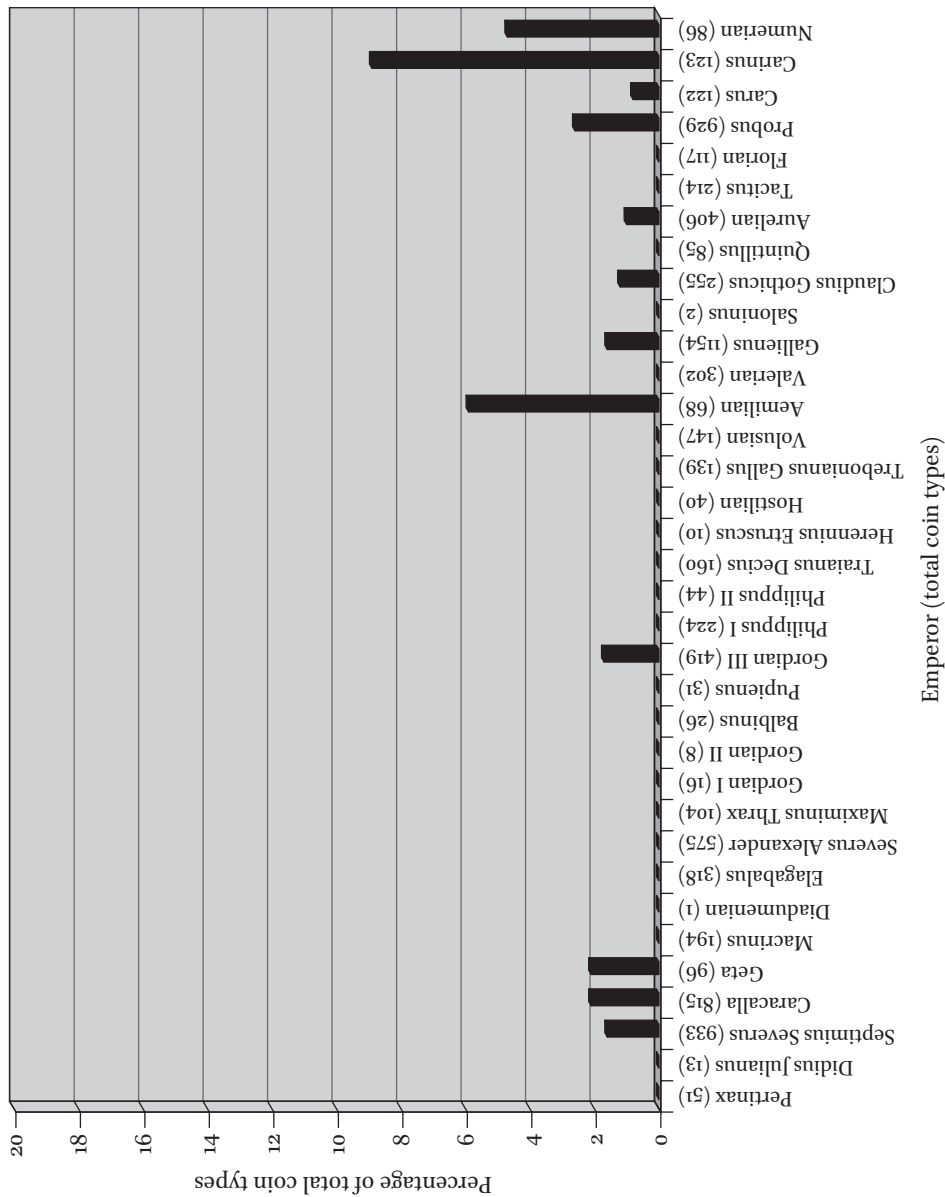


Figure 20 Proportions of coin types referring to Hercules per emperor



Image 5 Hercules (RIC IV.3, Gordianus III, no. 116)

What about the period between Commodus and the Tetrarchy, between the two triumphs of the Roman Hercules? What role did Hercules play in this era full of change and uncertainties?

When we look at figure 20, it is clear that the importance attached to the deified hero on coinage differed during the various third-century reigns (*image 5*), although Hercules, together with Jupiter and Mars, was 'central to Rome's *veterrimae religiones*'.⁶³ Nevertheless, from the reign of Aemilian onward, Hercules' importance in imperial ideology increased. Again, as in the case of Jupiter, Aemilian's reign marks a moment of change. The importance attached to Hercules in imperial ideology from the reign of Aemilian onward could imply that the Herculean prominence in Tetrarchic ideology did not come out of the blue.

Concerning the second half of the third century, we can divide the Hercules coin types roughly into three groups:⁶⁴

- 1) Coin types which propagate the invincibility of Hercules (Hercules as *victor* or *invictus*).

iuvit probavitque se non magis a dis accepisse caelum quam eisdem reddidisse. See further O. Hekster, "The city of Rome in late imperial ideology: The Tetrarchs, Maxentius, and Constantine", *MediterrAnt* II.2 (1999), pp. 717–748; p. 719.

⁶³ G. Fowden, "Public religion", in: Bowman, Garnsey and Cameron, *CAH* 12², pp. 553–570; p. 558. *Veterrimae religiones*: Aurelius Victor, *De Caesaribus* 39.45.

⁶⁴ These three groups are derived from the three 'Erscheinungsformen des politischen Idealheros in der Kaiserzeit' as they appear in: W. Derichs, *Herakles. Vorbild des Herrschers in der Antike* (Diss. Cologne, 1950), pp. 119–127.

- 2) Coin types on which Hercules appears as the emperor's *comes* or *conservator*.
- 3) Coin types on which the image of Hercules is combined with the *virtus* of the emperor.

The first two groups combined are smaller than the third category. Hercules as *victor* and *invictus* appears on coin types of Aemilian and Claudius Gothicus respectively.⁶⁵ Coins of the latter ruler portray Hercules together with Minerva as the imperial *conservatores*.⁶⁶ Gallienus labels Hercules *conservator* as well.⁶⁷ Hercules as *comes* appears only on Probus' coins.⁶⁸ In contrast to *conservator*, *comes* expresses a more intimate relationship between emperor and god:

Any such word, when used of a deity in relation to the emperor, denotes a relationship and one vouchsafed by the deity, who could go with the emperor on his ways and who could guard him, on the march or on the seat of authority.⁶⁹

Therefore, by labeling Hercules as his companion, Probus also elevated his own status.⁷⁰

The majority of the coins from the second half of the third century devoted to Hercules connect the god with the imperial *virtus*; the coin types of Aemilian, Gallienus, Aurelian, Probus, Carus, Carinus, and Numerian link Hercules to *virtus Augusti*.⁷¹ In the case of Gallienus and Carus, *virtus* is connected directly to the person of the emperor and Hercules is therefore more intimately linked to the ruler; the coins do not simply mention VIRTUS AVG but VIRTUS GALLIENI AVGVSTI and VIRTUS CARI (INVICTI) AVG.⁷²

The tradition of linking the emperor's *virtus* to Hercules was introduced by Gordian III; he is the first emperor on whose coins this relation

⁶⁵ RIC IV.3, Aemilianus, nos. 3a), 3b), 44; RIC V.1, Claudius Gothicus, no. 50.

⁶⁶ RIC V.1, Claudius Gothicus, no. 203.

⁶⁷ RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 201, 202.

⁶⁸ RIC V.2, Probus, nos. 70, 71, 72.

⁶⁹ A.D. Nock, "The emperor's divine *comes*", *JRS* 37 (1947), pp. 102–116; p. 103. See also L.D. Possenti, "Le divinità comites", *AFLM* 28 (1995), pp. 141–170.

⁷⁰ Kreucher, *Der Kaiser Marcus Aurelius Probus*, p. 192.

⁷¹ RIC IV.3, Aemilianus, no. 26; RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 454; RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 5, 6, 16, 91, 327, 328, 331, 537, 539, 595, 623, 624, 671–673, 678; RIC V.1, Aurelian, nos. 57, 58, 74, 318; RIC V.2, Probus, nos. 14, 576, 577, 901, 902; RIC V.2, Carus, no. 117; RIC V.2, Carinus, nos. 233–235, 268, 269, 271, 272, 284, 291, 321; RIC V.2, Numerianus, nos. 407, 408, 439, 465.

⁷² RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 5, 6; RIC V.2, Carus, no. 117.

is shown.⁷³ After the reign of Gordian III, every emperor who refers to Hercules on his coins (Claudius Gothicus excluded) linked his *virtus* to the invincible deified hero. This practice continued under Tetrarchic rule.⁷⁴

Virtus was an important imperial quality in the third century (see chapter four). This can not only be derived from the large number of *virtus* types, but also from the fact that emperors who reigned for a short period of time, like Gordian I and II, issued relatively many *virtus* types. Apparently, *virtus* was an important virtue that had to be propagated as soon as possible in an era of military strife.⁷⁵ Apart from Hercules, Mars could be linked to the imperial *virtus* as well.⁷⁶ However, whereas Mars connoted war, Hercules proclaimed more general invincibility.⁷⁷

Apart from the Hercules coin types observed in the Roman Empire in general (at least from Trajan onward) and the second half of the third century in particular, some exceptional Hercules coin types were issued under Septimius Severus, his sons, Claudius Gothicus and Probus. Septimius upheld the Antonine tradition in which Hercules played the role of imperial patron, but claimed a personal relationship with the god by associating Hercules to his homeland.⁷⁸ Together with Liber, Hercules (in the guise of Melquart) became one of the *di patrii* and appears with Liber on Severus' coins (as *di patrii* and *di auspices*).⁷⁹ In the period 196–8, coins bearing the legend HERCVLI DEFENS were struck.⁸⁰ A large issue of coin types with the image of Hercules on the reverse was struck in 204, in honour of the *Ludi Saeculares*.⁸¹ Again, Liber and Hercules were depicted together.

⁷³ RIC IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 95, 108, 110, 116, 120, 309.

⁷⁴ See for example RIC VI, Treveri, no. 3 (Constantius); RIC VI, Treveri, nos. 24, 25, 26 (Maximianus); RIC VI, Treveri, no. 84a (Diocletianus); RIC VI, Ticinus, no. 99 (Constantinus); RIC VI, Roma, no. 9 (Maximianus). See also a coin type bearing the legend VIRTUS HERCVLI CAESARIS: RIC VI, Treveri, no. 86 (Constantius).

⁷⁵ Hekster and Manders, "Kaiser gegen Kaiser", p. 139. See also below, p. 171.

⁷⁶ For other images on *virtus* coin types, see below, pp. 172–176.

⁷⁷ Jaczynowska, "Le culte de l'Hercule romain", p. 635.

⁷⁸ Derichs, *Herakles*, p. 83.

⁷⁹ *Di patrii*: RIC IV.1, Septimius Severus, no. 762. *Di auspices*: RIC IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 25, 31, 661, 666, 669. On the *di patrii*, see Hekster, *Commodus*, pp. 191–192.

⁸⁰ RIC IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 79, 97, 111, 488. See further, Hekster, *Commodus*, pp. 187–188.

⁸¹ RIC IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 257, 761, 763B, 764A, 765. On Hercules and Liber and the *Ludi Saeculares* see Lichtenberger, *Severus Pius Augustus*, pp. 51–54. On the *Ludi Saeculares* represented on coins see J. Scheid, "Déchiffrer des monnaies. Réflexion sur la représentation figurée des Jeux séculaires", in: C. Auvray-Assayas ed., *Images romaines. Actes de la table ronde organisée à l'École Normale Supérieure (24–26 octobre 1996) par Florence Dupont et Clara Auvray-Assayas* (Paris, 1998), pp. 13–35.

Caracalla continued his father's 'coin policy' insofar as emphasizing Hercules as one of the patron gods of Lepcis Magna; coins bearing the legend *DI PATRII* were struck during his reign as well.⁸² Likewise, types referring to the *Ludi Saeculares* and Hercules (together with Liber) appeared during Caracalla's reign.⁸³ Caracalla and Geta issued a new coin type displaying Hercules: the two brothers (clasping hands) while they are crowned by Apollo and Hercules.⁸⁴ In the case of Caracalla, the type bears the legend *CONCORDIAE AVGG*. On these particular coin types of Caracalla and Geta, Hercules and Apollo appear as the guarantors of the harmony between the two brothers. In vain, as it turned out.

Claudius Gothicus issued a coin type which bears on the reverse the legend *IVVENTVS/IVVENTAS AVG* and portrays Hercules holding his club and lion skin.⁸⁵ This type has no precedent in the third century and parallels the Jupiter Iuvenis coins issued by Commodus.⁸⁶ Whether Claudius Gothicus bears Hercules' features in the same way as Commodus had borne Jupiter's is questionable.

Probus' types form another exception. Probus' Hercules coins bearing the legends *COMITI PROBI AVG* and *HERCVLI ROMANO AVG* resemble Commodus' types which mark one of the first steps (*comes*) and the last step (Hercules Romanus) in Commodus' identification with the god.⁸⁷ However, there are no further indications that Probus had a similar objective as Commodus. It is more likely that Probus tried to counter the coins of the already defeated Gallic emperor Postumus with his own coinage. After all, Postumus had exploited Hercules' popularity in the west.⁸⁸ By associating his reign with the Hercules coins struck in the Gallic Empire and thus presenting a sign of continuity to the troublesome Germans, Probus could have tried to appeal to them. Probus issued coins which resembled Postumus' coins in image and legend (*HERCVLI ARCADIO*, *HERCVLI*

⁸² *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 76, 422. See further below, pp. 233–234.

⁸³ *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 74a), 74b), 418, 420, 421.

⁸⁴ See also p. 133. *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 459, 508a), 508b), 508c); *RIC* IV.1, Geta, nos. 155a), 155b).

⁸⁵ *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, no. 213.

⁸⁶ See further Hekster, *Commodus*, p. 102.

⁸⁷ *HERCVLI PACIFERO*: *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383. *COMITI PROBI AVG*: *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 70, 71, 72. *HERCVLI ROMANO AVG*: *RIC* V.2, Probus, no. 4. See further Kreucher, *Der Kaiser Marcus Aurelius Probus*, p. 196. On Postumus and the Gallic Empire, see above, pp. 14–15.

⁸⁸ Derichs, *Herakles*, p. 102. For Hercules on Postumus' coins, see P. Bastien, *Le monnayage de bronze de Postume* (Wetteren, 1967). See also G. Moitrieux, *Hercules in Gallia. Recherches sur la personnalité et le culte d'Hercule en Gaule* (Paris, 2002), p. 518.

ERYMANTHIO, HERCVLI INMORTALI (*sic*)).⁸⁹ By adding Romanus to Hercules on the above mentioned type, Probus maintained some distance to the Gallic Postumus and emphasized *romanitas*.

In fact, this was not the first time that Hercules was used for political purposes in the third century. A 'battle of images', with Hercules as object, occurred some years earlier. When Postumus seized power and proclaimed himself ruler of the Gallic Empire, he adopted Hercules as his personal deity and depicted the god on coins of all denominations during his reign. Soon after Postumus' usurpation, Gallienus promoted Hercules on coins too. In 265, the year in which Gallienus tried to eliminate the Gallic Empire, he issued another Hercules series. It seems that Gallienus claimed the deity with whom Postumus associated himself; thus Postumus and Gallienus struggled to legitimize their power by means of divine support through Hercules – a true example of 'image competition'.⁹⁰

Returning to Probus' coins depicting labours of Hercules, we can find precedents on imagery constructed under the reign of Hadrian, Commodus, Gallienus and Postumus. Hercules' labours are, however, mainly depicted on medallions and gold coins; coins of lower denominations advertise only the Nemean lion (from the Tetrarchy onward) and the apples of the Hesperides (from the rule of Gallienus onward). Other archaeological finds from the western part of the Empire confirm this picture: Hercules' labours appear mainly on valuable materials such as silver, stone (marble), and mosaics.⁹¹ It might be possible to infer from this that specific groups were targeted. After all, the images were spread only by a limited number of media to which the poor had little or no access. Audience targeting might also lie behind the communication of the *signa* 'Iovius' and 'Herculius' which Diocletian and Maximian adopted.

⁸⁹ Derichs, *Herakles*, p. 101. Apparently, Probus compared his own successes in Illyria to the achievements of Hercules, see Kreucher, *Der Kaiser Marcus Aurelius Probus*, p. 149. HERCVLI ARCADIO: *RIC* V.2, Probus, no. 585. HERCVLI ERYMANTHIO: *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 586, 587. HERCVLI INMORTALI (*sic*): *RIC* V.2, Probus, no. 588. HERCVLI IMMORTALI appears on Tetrarchic coins as well (see for instance *RIC* VI, Treveri, nos. 48 (Maximianus)). On the myths of Hercules, see for example C. Jourdain-Annequin, *Héraclès aux Portes du Soir. Mythe et Histoire* (Paris, 1989). For Postumus dealing with the Germans, see p. 15.

⁹⁰ Hekster and Manders, "Kaiser gegen Kaiser", pp. 141–142; Hekster, *Rome and its Empire*, p. 35. See also K. Kraft, "Der Helm des römischen Kaisers", in: idem ed., *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur antiken Geldgeschichte und Numismatik* 1 (Darmstadt, 1978), pp. 133–144; pp. 140–141.

⁹¹ R. Volkommer, "Die Zwölf Arbeiten des Herakles in der Römischen Reichsprägung", in: T. Hackens and G. Moucharte eds., *INC* 11.2 (Louvain-la-Neuve, 1993), pp. 313–320; p. 320.

Although the divine epithets did not appear on coins, in papyri and in legal sources, a few medallions, inscriptions and panegyrics assert them. The fact that the *signa* were communicated solely by a few media might point to the possibility that they were intended only to appeal to a specific target group.⁹²

4. MARS⁹³

Together with Rhea Silvia Mars generated Romulus and Remus and thus stood at the basis of the power of Rome. Mars was therefore not only seen as Rome's creator, but also as her protector. Obviously, the god's protective function can be linked to his role of war god.⁹⁴ In modern scholarship, however, the function of Mars has often been limited to this role.⁹⁵ This probably originates from the fact that Mars is frequently used as a synonym for war, battle and fortune in war in Latin literature and that the month in which the military campaigns began was named after this particular deity.⁹⁶ Moreover, when the army marched out of Rome the rite of *lustratio exercitus* was performed at the Campus Martius.⁹⁷ The relation between Mars and the soldiers is illuminated by, amongst others, the images of Mars on soldiers' armor used for parades as well as the numerous bronze statuettes of Mars that were found and which were used as votive gifts by the military.⁹⁸

Yet, there are indications that Mars was not solely invoked as the god of warfare. For instance, Cato the Elder quotes in his *De Agricultura* a *carmen* that was performed at the annual fertility ceremony of *lustratio agri*

⁹² Rees, *Diocletian and the Tetrarchy*, p. 56. See also Rees, "The emperors' new names", p. 225.

⁹³ Not all coin types with references to Mars belong to the category 'divine association'. However, all coin types referring to Mars are included in this section. See above, p. 52.

⁹⁴ Hobbold, *Das Bild des Mars*, p. 13; J.H. Croon, "Die Ideologie des Marskultes unter dem Principat und ihre Vorgeschichte", *ANRW II* 17.1 (1981), pp. 246–275; p. 268.

⁹⁵ See for example G. Wissowa, *Religion und Kultus der Römer* (Munich 1912), p. 143. For more than 150 years, scholars have debated about Mars' original significance, see U.W. Scholz, *Studien zum altitalischen und altrömischen Marskult und Marsmythos* (Heidelberg, 1970), pp. 9–17 and Croon, "Die Ideologie des Marskultes", pp. 260–261.

⁹⁶ Hobbold, *Das Bild des Mars*, pp. 15–16. See for instance Virgil, *Aeneid* 10.22.

⁹⁷ On *lustratio exercitus*, see Rüpke, *Domus Militiae*, p. 144.

⁹⁸ Hobbold, *Das Bild des Mars*, pp. 15–16 with further references. It seems that Mars fulfilled the ordinary soldiers' needs. Yet, Jupiter, highest god of the state, was also the highest god of the army at the same time, see *ibid.*, p. 16 and above n. 48.

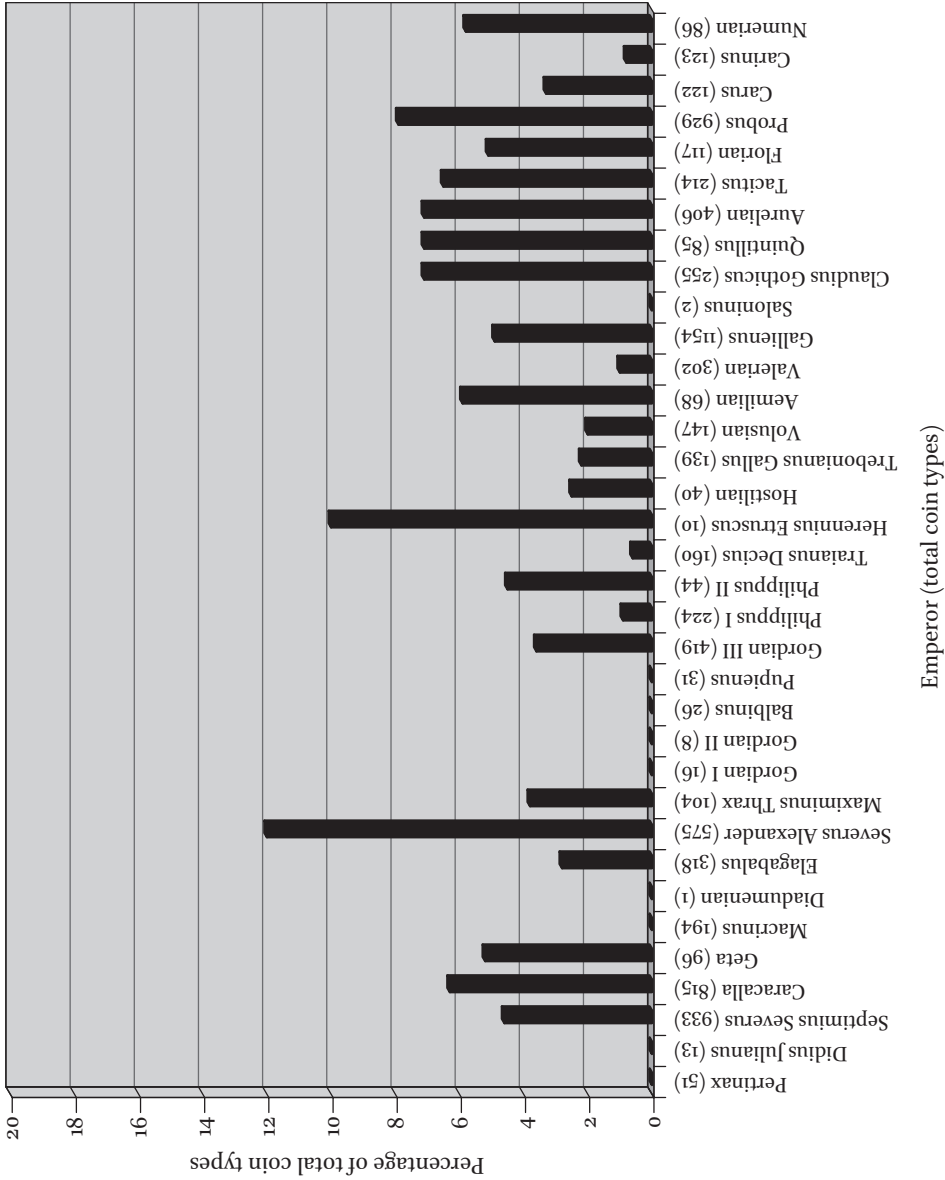


Figure 21 Proportions of coin types referring to Mars per emperor

(purification of the land).⁹⁹ This hymn seems to indicate that Mars also had a special significance regarding 'the farm, the land and the ground',¹⁰⁰ Mars is invoked here as the protector of the fields and the cattle.¹⁰¹ The same passage, moreover, points to Mars warding off sickness.¹⁰² Another example is provided by the important role that Mars played in Italic *ver sacrum* rites. The history of many tribes, such as the Picentes, the Hirpini and the Mamertines, began with a *ver sacrum* ritual, by which, in a case of emergency, plants, animals and humans were consecrated to a deity (*id est* the animals were sacrificed and the people expelled). In many cases, Mars acted as guardian of the expelled peoples; in the guise of an animal, the god led them to a new homeland.¹⁰³

Although the above examples imply that Mars' field of activities encompassed more than solely warfare, references to Mars most frequently evoke his role as war god.¹⁰⁴ The clearest example forms the temple dedicated to him at the Forum of Augustus. This temple accommodated not only a cult statue of the armored god bearing spear and shield, but it also housed the recovered Parthian standards.¹⁰⁵

Tetrarchic coinage shows that, during the first Tetrarchy, the prominent positions within the Roman pantheon were reserved for Jupiter and Hercules. Mars could by no means rival them; the majority of Tetrarchic coins refer to Jupiter and Hercules, whereas references to Mars appear on a very small number of coins.¹⁰⁶ Diocletian's pacification of the Empire, with its subsequent decline of warfare (against foreign enemies and internal

⁹⁹ Cato, *De Agricultura*, 141.2–4.

¹⁰⁰ Cato, *De Agricultura* 141.3: '... harumce rerum ergo, fundi terrae agrique mei lustrandi lustrique faciendi ergo, sicuti dixi, macte hisce suovitautilibus lactentibus inmolandis esto'.

¹⁰¹ See also T. Derks, *Gods, Temples and Ritual Practices* (Amsterdam, 1998), p. 102.

¹⁰² Cato, *De Agricultura* 141.2–3.

¹⁰³ Scholz, *Studien zum altitalischen und altrömischen Marskult und Marsmythos*, pp. 49–50.

¹⁰⁴ Derks, *Gods, Temples and Ritual Practices*, p. 102.

¹⁰⁵ On the temple of Mars Ultor at the Forum Augustum, see *LTUR* 2, pp. 289–295. See also for instance M. Spannagel, *Exemplaria Principis. Untersuchungen zu Entstehung und Ausstattung des Augustusforums* (Heidelberg, 1999) and J.W. Rich, "Augustus' Parthian honours, the temple of Mars Ultor and the arch in the Forum Romanum", *PBSR* 56 (1988), pp. 71–128.

¹⁰⁶ The claim that the Caesars had a special connection with Mars and Sol (A.K. Bowman, "Diocletian and the first Tetrarchy, A.D. 284–305", in: Bowman, Garnsey and Cameron, *CAH* 12², pp. 67–89; p. 78 and Fowden, "Public religion", p. 558) is not supported by the coinage. See further M.D. Smith, "The religion of Constantius I", *GRBS* 38 (1997), pp. 187–208.



Image 6 Mars Victor (*RIC* V.2, Probus, no. 83)

usurpers) from the imperial forefront, may explain this lack of Tetrarchic attention paid to Mars. However, Mars was not the only deity whose prominence diminished on Tetrarchic coinage. Thus, a more likely explanation for the limited presence of Mars on coins issued under Tetrarchic rule is the preferential treatment of Jupiter and Hercules and their consequent omnipresence on these coins.¹⁰⁷

With regard to Mars, the coinage presents a different picture in the century before the accession of Diocletian and his co-rulers (*image 6*). As figure 21 shows, from the reign of Gordian III onward, Mars played a continuously relevant, though never overbearing, role. Even in the period before Gordian's emperorship, the war god was certainly not neglected; all the members of the Severan dynasty and Maximinus Thrax put Mars on their coins. Only the coinage of the short-lived emperors in the first half of the third century overlooked Mars.¹⁰⁸ Yet, in the second half of the third century, even the emperors who reigned for a relatively short period claimed some sort of relationship with the god.

Mars' position during roughly the whole third century could easily be reduced to the emperors' preoccupation with war and suppressing internal disturbances in this period. But was warlike activity the only motive

¹⁰⁷ In contrast, at some stages of his regime Maxentius attributed a prominent position to Mars within his ideology and thereby reduced the importance of Hercules, the deity with whom Maxentius' father Maximian was so closely associated. This emphasis on Mars could indicate that Maxentius wanted to distance himself from 'the Herculean house' and thus from the Tetrarchy. See Hekster, "The city of Rome in late imperial ideology", pp. 731–732.

¹⁰⁸ Pertinax, Didius Julianus, Macrinus, Diadumenian, Gordian I, Gordian II, Balbinus, Pupienus.

for putting Mars on the imperial coinage? A comparison between third-century coinage and coins stemming from rather peaceful periods may clarify this matter. Because of the preferential treatment of Jupiter and Hercules, Tetrarchic coinage does not provide a good test case for the hypothetical linkage between Mars' frequent appearance on third-century coins and the military problems inside and outside of the Roman Empire. When we look at periods earlier in the history of the Roman Empire, however, a trend emerges. The role that Augustus attributed to Mars had a military connotation and also pointed to the myth of Romulus and Remus (thus to Mars and Rhea Silvia).¹⁰⁹ Whereas references to Mars after the reign of Augustus were scarce, he regained importance in the year of the four emperors.¹¹⁰ After 69, the attention paid to Mars remained constant.¹¹¹ Thus, the impetus which Augustus and the four emperors in 69 had given to Mars' close association with imperial power can probably be traced to their military engagements. However, in the period following the year of the four emperors, violent or not, Mars remained a prominent deity. So, the presence of Mars on third-century coins does not seem to be an isolated development attributable solely to the military problems of this era. After all, Mars was associated not only with warlike periods. However, the more or less constant presence of Mars and the relatively large quantity of references to him (especially during the reign of Severus Alexander and in the period 268–282)¹¹² on third-century coinage may hint at the military character of the period.

True to the tradition rooted during Vespasian's reign, Mars fulfilled different tasks in the third century; he appeared in many guises on third-century coinage. Between the reigns of Commodus and the Tetrarchs the emphasis lay on Mars as the bringer and the guardian of peace (*pacificus*, *pacator*)¹¹³ and Mars as the patron of (successful) military activities

¹⁰⁹ Romulus rarely appears on third-century coins.

¹¹⁰ Croon, "Die Ideologie des Marskultes", p. 270.

¹¹¹ Hobbold, *Das Bild des Mars*, p. 75.

¹¹² Because of the small number of coin types issued by Herennius Etruscus, the large quantity of references to Mars on the coinage of Herennius Etruscus provides a somewhat biased view.

¹¹³ Mars Pacifer: *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 113, 133A, 741; *RIC* IV.2, Severus Alexander, nos. 159–161, 289, 585; *RIC* IV.2, Maximinus Thrax, nos. 11, 55–57; *RIC* IV.3, Gordianus III, no. 212; *RIC* IV.3, Trebonianus Gallus, nos. 40, 85; *RIC* IV.3, Aemilianus, nos. 5a), 5b), 15; *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, nos. 169, 244, 272; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 225; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 56, 112, 236, 353, 370, 422, 492; *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 7, 68–73, 128, 129, 175; *RIC* V.1, Quintillus, nos. 24, 25, 58, 59; *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, nos. 33, 34, 112, 133, 270, 271; *RIC* V.1, Tacitus, nos. 32, 145; *RIC* V.1, Florianus, no. 72; *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 40–43,

(*propugnator, ultor, victor, invictus*, Mars linked to *virtus Augusti*).¹¹⁴ Not only the latter, but also the first guise of Mars has a military character; bringing and guarding peace are intimately connected with military activities.¹¹⁵ Both ideological types thus refer to different aspects of Mars' military function, that of war god. The appearance of Mars Pacifer, Mars Ultor, Mars Victor and Mars linked to *virtus Augusti* on third-century coins is especially dominant in the second half of the century. Croon connects the propagation of Mars Pacifer and Mars Ultor to the internal and external threats in the third-century Roman Empire:

Es wirkt fast wie eine Ironie, daß die Kaiser, die am meisten gegen ständige Bedrohungen zu kämpfen hatten, den 'Friedensbringer' in der Propaganda besonders hervorheben. Mann kann sich dem Eindruck nicht einziehen daß diese Kaiser die Friedenspropaganda so intensiv betrieben weil sie das Reich von äußeren und inneren Drohungen schützen wollten, aber in der Tat nicht mehr die Kraft der 'Friedensherrscher' aus früheren Zeiten des Principats besaßen. Je mehr sie jene erfolglos nachzuahmen suchten, desto mehr glichen sie sich ihnen in der Ideologie an. Wenn man nun die Münzen mit der Aufschrift Mars Ultor überblickt, dann ergibt sich dasselbe Bild.¹¹⁶

177, 470–472, 505–513, 540–544, 699, *RIC* V.2, Numerianus, no. 402. Mars Pacator: *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 33, 45; *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 222; possibly *RIC* V.1, Quintillus, no. 58. The coin types showing Mars and the legend CLEMENTIA TEMPORVM (*RIC* V.1, Tacitus, nos. 83, 206, 214) can probably also be put in this category.

¹¹⁴ Mars Propugnator: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 223, 223A, 235, 307; *RIC* IV.2, Severus Alexander, no. 244; *RIC* IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 145–147, 162, 332a)–333; *RIC* IV.3, Herennius Etruscus, no. 150A; *RIC* IV.3, Hostilianus, no. 187; *RIC* IV.3, Trebonianus Gallus, no. 84; *RIC* IV.3, Volusianus, no. 219; *RIC* IV.3, Aemilianus, no. 6; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 25, 152, 153; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 57, 58, 237–240, 493. Mars Ultor: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 473; *RIC* IV.2, Severus Alexander, nos. 158, 207, 245–248, 635–638; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 650; *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 66, 67, 126, 127; *RIC* V.1, Quintillus, nos. 69, 70; *RIC* V.1, Tacitus, no. 108; Probus, nos. 148, 266; *RIC* V.2, Carus, nos. 92, 93. Mars Victor: *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 114, 114A, 134, 151C, 404–407, 443, 443A, 456–457A, 508, 509, 523A; *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 306; *RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, nos. 119–123, 362–364; *RIC* IV.2, Severus Alexander, nos. 157, 162, 584; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 241, 649; *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 65, 74, 125; *RIC* V.1, Tacitus, nos. 29–31, 112; *RIC* V.1, Florianus, no. 20; *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 5, 6, 35–39, 82–89, 824, 825; *RIC* V.2, Numerianus, nos. 386–389. Mars Invictus: *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, nos. 357–359. Mars linked to *virtus Augusti*: *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 463A, 487; *RIC* IV.3, Philippus II, nos. 223, 263; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 56, 57, 102, 103, 184–186, 246; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 89, 90, 131, 132, 134, 316–321, 329, 330, 364, 591; *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, no. 172; *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, nos. 1, 5, 15, 97, 98, 156, 179–183, 210, 378–380, 388; *RIC* V.1, Tacitus, nos. 12, 177, 178; *RIC* V.1, Florianus, nos. 14, 15, 24, 109; *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 57, 58, 145, 146, 226–228, 240–242, 281, 282, 304, 426–433, 578, 602, 603, 810–816; *RIC* V.2, Carus, nos. 34, 65; *RIC* V.2, Carinus, no. 270.

¹¹⁵ 'Der Friedensgedanke ist in der Kaiserzeit selbstverständlich nicht von der Sieghaftigkeit zu trennen', see Berrens, *Sonnenkult und Kaisertum*, p. 198.

¹¹⁶ Croon, "Die Ideologie des Marskultes", pp. 271–72.

Besides these two most common guises, Mars as the bringer and the guardian of peace and Mars as the patron of (successful) military activities, the deity is, to a smaller extent, connected directly with the armed forces (images of Mars combined with legends like *RESTITVTOR EXERCITI*, *FIDES MILITVM/EXERCITI*, or the citation of a legion).¹¹⁷ Obviously, these types also refer to Mars' military function. Additionally, Mars appears on a limited number of coin types as 'originator' (types bearing the legend *MARS PATER*, types displaying Mars together with Rhea Silvia),¹¹⁸ as tutelary god (types bearing the legends *MARTI CONSER* and *MARS RED AVG*)¹¹⁹ as well as without having a specific function as referred to in the legend (*MARS AVG*, *DEO MARTI* or coins displaying an image of Mars and bearing a legend consisting of standard imperial titulature).¹²⁰

Much of Mars' presence on third-century coinage seems thus to be linked to the warlike character of the period 193–284. On coin types issued in the third century, Mars is shown mainly in his function as war god by appearing as peace bringer, peace keeper and patron of (successful) military activities. Moreover, Mars' almost constant presence on third-century coinage and the (relatively) large quantity of types seem unique and probably also highlight the military character of the third century.

5. SUN GODS¹²¹

In addition to Jupiter, Hercules, and Mars, sun gods appeared regularly on Roman coinage. This tendency to position sun gods or the sun prominently in the ruling ideology occurred also in earlier and later periods; sun cults flourished to various extents at different points in human history. Rulers

¹¹⁷ *RESTITVTOR EXERCITI*: *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, no. 366. *FIDES MILITVM/EXERCITI*: *RIC* IV.2, Severus Alexander, no. 195; *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, no. 393. Name of a legion: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 319.

¹¹⁸ *MARS PATER*: *RIC* IV. 1, Septimius Severus, nos. 46, 683, 687. Mars and Rhea Silvia: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 67, 68; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 345.

¹¹⁹ *MARTI CONSER*: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 491. *MARS RED AVG*: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 648.

¹²⁰ Coins showing images of Mars combined with legends as *VOTIS X ET XX, S C*, and *DIVI M PII F P M TR P III COS II P P* belong to this category as well. *MARS AVG*: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 647. Since Mars is directly connected to the Augustus in the legend of the latter coin type, the emperor propagates a special connection with Mars on these types. *DEO MARTI*: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 10.

¹²¹ Not all coin types with references to sun gods (in this case Sol and Apollo) belong to the category 'divine association'. However, all coin types referring to Sol and Apollo are included in this section. See above, p. 52.

in different periods linked themselves to the sun (gods) and represented themselves and their reigns with solar symbols.¹²² The most famous western example of setting up an extensive metaphor between the ruler and the sun may well be the case of Louis XIV. According to his royal memoirs, the sun was ‘the most noble’ of the heavenly bodies; therefore its image was suitable for the monarch.¹²³ During the Roman principate, sun (god) and ruler were not connected so explicitly. Moreover, from Augustus until Diocletian, attention paid to the sun god, its cult and symbolism varied. Three sun gods played considerable roles on third-century coinage. First comes Sol (*image 7*), who is the counterpart of the Greek Helios and whose cult is one of the oldest cults attested for Rome.¹²⁴ The second is Apollo (*image 8*), ‘the sun’, as Pausanias calls him,¹²⁵ who assisted Octavian in the battle of Actium and was traditionally linked to the principate.¹²⁶ The third one is the originally Syrian sun god Elagabal (*image 9*).

Sol remained present on coins during substantial periods of the third century and near-continuously present from the reign of Valerian onward (see figure 22). During Aurelian’s reign Sol flourished in all respects.¹²⁷ This tendency, although to a more limited degree, was pursued by his successors; Sol still played a minor role in Tetrarchic ideology. The commonly held opinion that the cult of Sol (in contrast with the cults of the ‘great Olympians’) played ‘an additional role’ in Rome, has, at least for the second half of the third century, been refuted by the numismatic evidence.¹²⁸

¹²² See E.H. Kantorowicz, “Oriens Augusti – Lever du Roi”, *DOP* 17 (1963), pp. 117–77. For more on ‘cosmic kingship’, see H.P. L’Orange, *Studies on the Iconography of Cosmic Kingship in the Ancient World* (Oslo, 1953).

¹²³ See for example P. Burke, *The fabrication of Louis XIV* (New Haven and London, 1992), p. 130.

¹²⁴ P. Matern, *Helios und Sol. Kulte und Ikonographie des griechischen und römischen Sonnengottes* (Istanbul, 2002), p. 22. I make no distinction between Sol Indiges and Sol Invictus; both were the same god with or without an additional epithet: ‘There is . . . no evidence for the postulated dichotomy between Sol Indiges and Sol Invictus’ (S.E. Hijmans, “The Sun which did not rise in the East; the cult of Sol Invictus in the light of non-literary evidence”, *BABesch* 71 (1996), pp. 115–150; p. 126) See further Matern, *Helios und Sol*, p. 45.

¹²⁵ Pausanias 7.23.8: Ἀπόλλωνα δὲ ἥλιον . . . From the fifth century B.C. onward, the Greek Apollo was equated with Helios in Greek literary sources. On the identification of Apollo with the sun, see for instance F. Graf, *Apollo* (London and New York, 2009), pp. 151–53.

¹²⁶ According to A. Gosling, Apollo had a special significance ‘for those who aspired to supreme power in the state’, of which Sulla and Caesar are good examples. See A. Gosling, “Octavian, Brutus and Apollo: a note on opportunist propaganda”, *AJPh* 107.4 (1986), pp. 586–589. See also Gurval, *Actium and Augustus*. See also Graf, *Apollo*, pp. 127–28 and below, n. 130.

¹²⁷ See below, pp. 150–154.

¹²⁸ *DNP* 11, pp. 692–695; pp. 693–694.



Image 7 Sol (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 113)



Image 8 Apollo Salutaris (*RIC* IV.3, Trebonianus Gallus, no. 32)



Image 9 Elagabal (*RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, no. 196A)

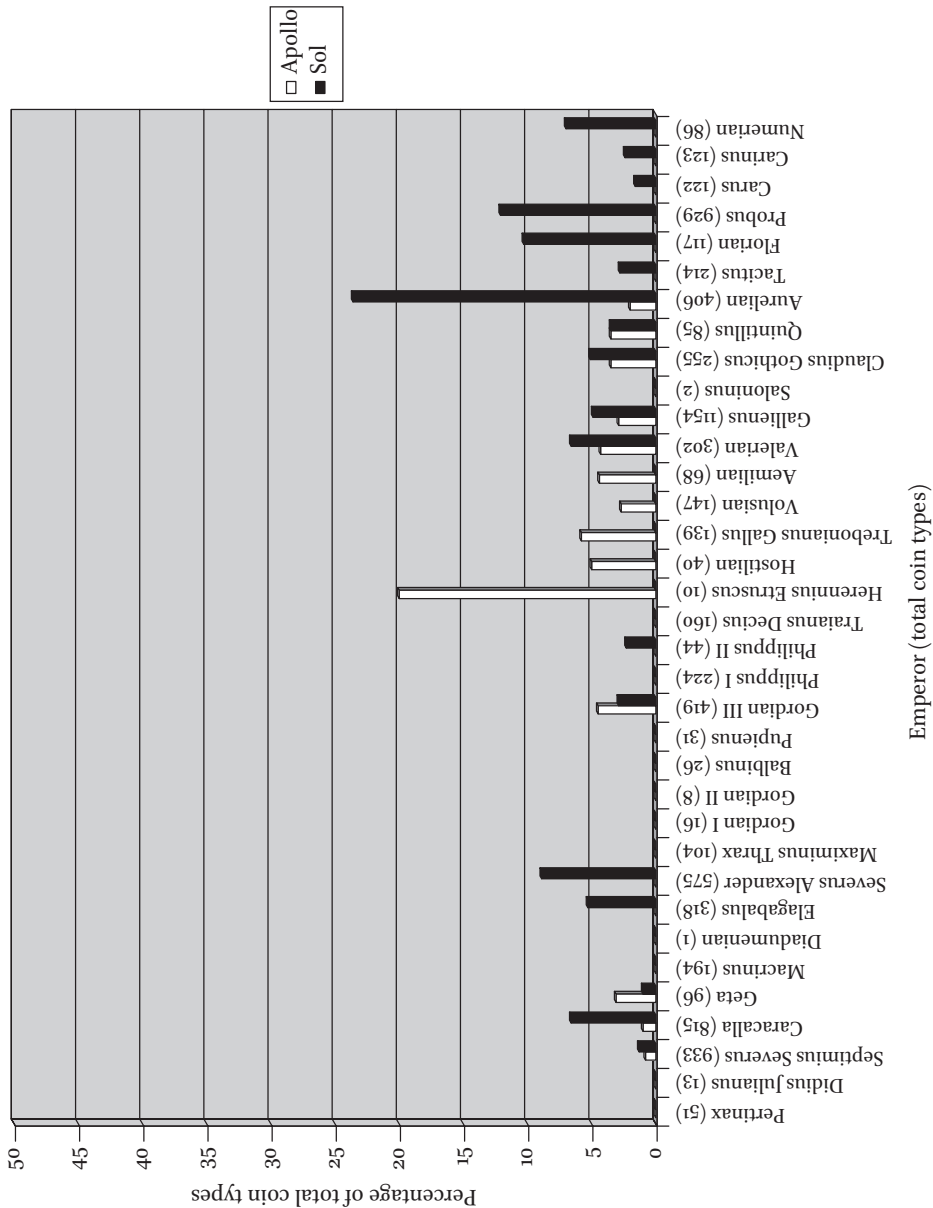


Figure 22 Proportions of coin types referring to Sol and Apollo per emperor

Apollo, by contrast, played a minor role on third-century imperial coinage (see figure 22). Only from the reign of Herennius Etruscus until Aurelian's emperorship did Apollo appear more frequently on the coinage.¹²⁹ In the period before Herennius Etruscus' reign, only Septimius Severus, his sons, Gordian III and Philippus I struck Apollonian coinage. From Tacitus onward, Apollo seems to have lost his place on imperial coinage completely. Apollo's absence in Tetrarchic ideology could probably be explained by the transition which took place in 284: the principate, inaugurated by the Apollo-promotor Augustus,¹³⁰ yielded to Diocletian's new form of rule. Perhaps, no space was left in Tetrarchic ideology for the deity who was so closely connected with (the founding of) the principate. In light of this evidence, the period 275–284 could be seen as transitional between two forms of rule, which might explain the absence of Apollo on imperial coins issued during the last years of the principate.

During the reigns of nine emperors both coin types referring to Sol and coin types emphasizing Apollo were issued.¹³¹ The majority of third-century emperors who paid attention to (a) sun god(s) on their coins, however, refer either to Sol or to Apollo.¹³² The latter might be explained by the possibility that the two sun gods Sol and Apollo were sometimes considered interchangeable sun gods. This hypothesis gains support from Macrobius' statement in his *Saturnalia* (ca. 400) that Apollo is identical to the sun.¹³³ Moreover, a coin type of Probus, bearing the legend *ORIENS AVG*, depicts Sol holding Apollo's bow, while on two coin types of Gallienus, Apollo appears with Sol's whip.¹³⁴ In addition, a coin type issued during Aurelian's reign displays an image of Sol accompanied by the legend *APOL CONS*

¹²⁹ Saloninus, Gallienus' son, forms the only exception.

¹³⁰ See Strazzulla, *Il principato di Apollo* and Gurval, *Actium and Augustus*. Octavian adopted Apollo as protector during his strife with Marc Anthony. Different stages characterize this adoption process. First, Apollo's name was used as military password in the battle of Philippi. Second, Octavian adopted Apollo's symbols when he was ruler of the west (sphinx, laurel wreath). Third, he attributed a naval victory in 36 B.C. to the help of Apollo and Diana and, fourth, his victory in the battle of Actium to Apollo. Finally, he placed himself under the protection of Apollo and Diana, who were both honored by Horace in his *Carmen Saeculare*, at the inauguration of a new *saeculum* in 17 B.C. See Graf, *Apollo*, p. 127.

¹³¹ Septimius Severus, Caracalla, Geta, Gordian III, Valerian, Gallienus, Claudius Gothicus, Quintillus and Aurelian (for *RIC* numbers, see appendix two).

¹³² Only Sol: Elagabalus, Severus Alexander, Philippus II, Tacitus, Florian, Probus, Carus, Carinus, Numerian. Only Apollo: Herennius Etruscus, Hostilian, Trebonianus Gallus, Volusian, Aemilian.

¹³³ Macrobius, *Saturnalia* 1.23.13: *Huius templi religio etiam divinatione praepollet, quae ad Apollinis potestatem refertur, qui idem atque sol est.*

¹³⁴ Sol with Apollo's bow: *RIC* V.2, Probus, no. 45. See further Berrens, *Sonnenkult und Kaisertum*, p. 130. Apollo with Sol's whip: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 6, 7.

AVG.¹³⁵ Although both Apollo and Sol are referred to separately on coin types issued during Gallienus', Aurelian's and Probus' reign, Probus' and Gallienus' types mentioned above may confirm the hypothesis that Apollo and Sol could be considered interchangeable sun gods.

The third sun god, the Syrian deity Elagabal, was the most prominent deity in the Roman Empire only for a short period (see 3.7.1).¹³⁶ While the child emperor Elagabalus reigned over the Empire, Jupiter had been cast aside and Elagabal became the head of the Roman pantheon. Coins reflected this religious revolution and (the worship of) the new deity received a prominent place on Elagabalus' coinage. Obviously, this divine substitution did not happen without striking a blow; it upset the rather fragile balance of power between emperor and senate as well as between Elagabalus and his legions. Finally, the discord resulted in the death of the emperor. After the murder of the 'priest-emperor', his successor Severus Alexander not only returned the black conical stone, which represented the sun god, to where it came from, but also banished the exotic deity from his coins. Only during a very short period, when Uranius Antoninus tried to seize the purple in 253, did the conical stone reappear on coins.¹³⁷ Thus, the prominent place given to a 'foreign' sun god proved to be an exception, a result of decisions made by a child emperor and a usurper. As soon as possible, after the death of both, the measures stemming from these decisions were reversed and the Syrian sun god lost his prominence for ever.

Because of the extraordinary character of both Elagabal's appearance on Elagabalus' coins and the overwhelming presence of Sol on Aurelian's coins, the attention paid to these gods during the two particular reigns will be treated as 'exceptions' (see 3.7).

5.1 Sol

Before the reign of Septimius Severus, Sol appeared only incidentally on imperial coinage.¹³⁸ This changed during the third century. In the period

¹³⁵ *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, no. 66.

¹³⁶ See Manders, "Religion and coinage", pp. 123–138; M. Icks, "Priesthood and imperial power. The religious reforms of Heliogabalus, 220–222 AD", in: C. Witschel, S. Schmidt-Hofner and O. Hekster, *Ritual Dynamics and Religious Change in the Roman Empire. IMEM 5* (Leiden and Boston, 2006), pp. 169–178; M. Icks, *The Crimes of Elagabalus*.

¹³⁷ *RIC* V.1, Uranius Antoninus, nos. 1, 2, 8. For more on the coins of Uranius Antoninus, see H.R. Baldus, *Uranus Antoninus. Münzprägung und Geschichte* (Bonn, 1971).

¹³⁸ Sol holds a minor position on the coins of Augustus, Vespasian, Trajan, Hadrian, and Commodus. See Schuol, "Die paganen Religionen", p. 931.

193–284, 19 emperors connected themselves with the sun god on their coins. Three iconographical types of Sol seem to have enjoyed favor in this time span.¹³⁹ First, Sol appeared without his *quadriga* but with his usual attributes, whip or globe, on the coinage of ten emperors.¹⁴⁰ Apparently, no special function is attributed to Sol on these coins; the legends consist of standard imperial titulature.

In the second place, Sol appears often as *conservator* on third-century imperial coinage. By this epithet, the sun god is comparable with Jupiter and Apollo who also appeared frequently as *di conservatores* in the third century. Elagabalus, Gallienus, Claudius Gothicus, Aurelian, Florian and Probus all minted Sol in his capacity of tutelary god on their coins.¹⁴¹

Third, since Sol was a god who could be closely linked to the inauguration of a new age, the image of the sun god was used to proclaim *saeculum aureum*.¹⁴² This was an important message for every emperor to put forward; it could create both hope and confidence in the capacities of the ruling emperor and was therefore a way to legitimize the emperor's power. The sun god was not the only means by which *saeculum aureum* could be emphasized (see chapter five). Personifications, such as Fortuna, Pax, and Felicitas, were deployed with the same aim.

Two different legends accompanied Sol that symbolized *saeculum aureum*; ORIENS AVG/AVGG and AETERNIT(AS) AVG/AVGG/IMPERI.¹⁴³ ORIENS AVG/AVGG is an ambiguous legend; it has not only a cultural-theological connotation but also a politico-geographical one and, as Kantorowicz points out, it is difficult to separate them.¹⁴⁴ On the one hand,

¹³⁹ Here, I refer to the three ways in which Sol was represented most frequently in the third century. I do not refer to the three separate sun gods Sol, Apollo, and Elagabal (see above, pp. 122–126).

¹⁴⁰ RIC IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 101, 115, 117, 217, 489, 492, 742, 744, 749; RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 30, 55A, 245, 264a)–264e), 281a)–281d), 293a–293f), 407–408b); RIC IV.1, Geta, no. 108; RIC IV.2, Elagabalus, nos. 17, 28, 37–41, 289, 300–303, 318, 320; RIC IV.2, Severus Alexander, nos. 8, 76, 100–102, 106, 109–116, 118–120, 122, 123, 125, 491, 500–504, 511–517, 525–532, 535–543; RIC IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 31, 168; RIC V.1, Valerianus, nos. 142, 142a); RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 117, 119–121; RIC V.1, Aurelianus, no. 185; RIC V.2, Probus, no. 279 (Sol appears only with his hand raised but without globe or whip on this type).

¹⁴¹ RIC IV.2, Elagabalus, no. 63; RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 282–285, 357; RIC V.1, Claudius Gothicus, no. 118; RIC V.1, Aurelianus, nos. 353, 371–373, 383–385; RIC V.1, Florianus, nos. 17, 18, 114, 115; RIC V.2, Probus, nos. 293, 294, 307–309, 347–354, 536–538, 669–673, 891, 915.

¹⁴² Hekster, *Commodus*, p. 100.

¹⁴³ Coin types bearing the legend ORIENS AVG/AVGG are divided into the categories 'geographical messages' and '*saeculum aureum*'. Coin types bearing the legend AETERNIT(AS) AVG/AVGG/IMPERI are divided into the category '*aeternitas*-messages'.

¹⁴⁴ Kantorowicz, "Oriens Augusti", pp. 119–135.

oriens could refer to the rising sun. In this way, *oriens Augusti* symbolizes a new beginning brought about by the emperor, just as the sun inaugurates a new beginning every morning.¹⁴⁵

Tellus may rest comfortably reclined and produce her fruits because the rise of the Sun-god emperor, who chases away all the demons of darkness, secures for her the *felicitas temporum*.¹⁴⁶

On the other hand, *oriens* could refer to the (grip on) the geographical Orient. In this connotation, the legend ORIENS AVG/AVGG emphasizes the Roman (military) activities in the East.¹⁴⁷ In his study of the sun cult Berrens disregards the geographical aspect of *oriens Augusti*; according to him, the meaning of this legend 'geht über die Ostpolitik hinaus'.¹⁴⁸ He seems to ignore the fact that almost every third-century emperor who put ORIENS AVG/AVGG on his coins experienced military troubles in the East. Moreover, the relation between Gordian III, the first emperor in the third century who issued coins bearing the legend ORIENS AVG, and the Persians was strained from the outset. Of course, this does not automatically imply that Gordian's main motive for striking these coins was the problematic relation with an Eastern people, but it seems certainly more than mere coincidence.

On the other hand, coins of Severus Alexander, Postumus and Carausius show that *oriens Augusti* does not always bear a one-to-one relation to problems in the East. The last years of Severus Alexander's reign were characterized by war with the Persians, but no ORIENS AVG coins were struck, whereas the Gallic emperor Postumus and the British usurper Carausius did strike ORIENS AVG coins, although they were, for obvious reasons, not militarily active in the East.¹⁴⁹ Moreover, during Valerian's and Gallienus' joint reign and Aurelian's reign coins bearing the legend RESTITVTOR ORIENTIS were struck.¹⁵⁰ On these coins, a woman symbolizes

¹⁴⁵ Berrens, *Sonnenkult und Kaisertum*, p. 64.

¹⁴⁶ Kantorowicz, "Oriens Augusti", p. 130. *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, no. 102 shows Sol rising from the ocean. According to Berrens, Septimius Severus is depicted as Sol on this type. The rising of the sun god-emperor here, *oriens Augusti*, symbolizes thus a new beginning (Berrens, *Sonnenkult und Kaisertum*, p. 41).

¹⁴⁷ Kantorowicz, "Oriens Augusti", p. 126.

¹⁴⁸ Berrens, *Sonnenkult und Kaisertum*, p. 64.

¹⁴⁹ Kantorowicz, "Oriens Augusti", p. 127.

¹⁵⁰ *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, nos. 286, 287; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 448; *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, nos. 140, 141, 233, 234, 350, 351, 404. On Aurelian's coin types bearing the legend RESTITVTOR ORIENTIS and showing an image of Sol see below, p. 152.

the (geographical) Orient.¹⁵¹ This means that the geographical Orient could be represented in at least one other way than through Sol. These above examples argue in favor of the hypothesis that the majority of ORIENS AVG/AVGG coins emphasized a new beginning, brought about by the emperor. The usage of the same sort of metaphorical language by rulers in other epochs, such as Louis XIV (who of course had no such troubles in the East), strengthens this.¹⁵² Yet, the geographical aspect cannot wholly be ignored. It would seem that many emperors used the ambiguity of the word *oriens* consciously.¹⁵³

The legends AETERNITAS AVG/AVGG and AETERNIT IMPERI are unambiguous. They hint at the eternity of the emperor and his reign.¹⁵⁴ Both messages, *oriens* and *aeternitas*, could therefore emphasize a *saeculum aureum* that paralleled to the reign of the emperor in which the coins were struck. Because Sol appears on the majority of coins bearing these legends, Sol became the symbol of *saeculum aureum*.

As for the legends ORIENS AVG/AVGG and AETERNITAS AVG/AVGG together with an image of Sol, Gordian III is the first emperor in the third century who broadcast these specific messages on his coinage.¹⁵⁵ After Gordian III, ORIENS AVG/AVGG was put forward by Valerian, Gallienus, Claudius Gothicus, Aurelian, Probus, Carinus, and Numerian.¹⁵⁶ The propagation of AETERNITAS AVG/AVGG by Gordian III, which, according to Di Vita-Evrard, formed part of attempts to restore imperial power and the psychological preparation for the battle against the Persians, was continued by Valerian, Gallienus, Claudius Gothicus, Aurelian, and Probus,

¹⁵¹ See Kantorowicz, "Oriens Augusti", p. 127.

¹⁵² Ibid., pp. 162–177.

¹⁵³ Ibid., p. 126.

¹⁵⁴ Berrens, *Sonnenkult und Kaisertum*, p. 70.

¹⁵⁵ ORIENS AVG: RIC IV.3, Gordianus III, no. 213. AETERNITAS AVG: RIC IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 83, 97, 98, 109, 111, 117, 297a)–297c). On Gordian III as the first emperor who minted AETERNITAS AVG coins, see G. di Vita-Evrard, "Probus, Aeternus Augustus", in: M. Christol et al. eds., *Institutions, Société et Vie Politique dans l'Empire Romain au IV^e siècle ap. J.-C. Actes de la table ronde autour de l'oeuvre d'André Chastagnol* (Paris, 20–21 janvier 1989) (Paris and Rome, 1992), pp. 225–247; pp. 233–34.

¹⁵⁶ RIC V.1, Valerianus, nos. 2, 10–13, 46, 47, 106, 107, 144, 148, 170, 187, 198; RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 86, 154, 229, 230, 273, 303, 387, 388, 445; RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 62, 113, 114, 248–251, 354, 448, 451, 494–498; RIC V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 76–78, 153–155; RIC V.1, Aurelian, nos. 17, 18, 61–65, 67, 134–137, 150, 151, 187, 188, 230, 246–249, 250–254, 255, 276–280–283, 360–365, 397, 413, 414, 416; RIC V.2, Probus, nos. 44, 45, 267, 392, 589, 590, 700; RIC V.2, Carinus, nos. 262, 310; RIC V.2, Numerianus, nos. 381, 411, 412, 428, 429, 454. See Schuol, "Die paganen Religionen", pp. 931–32.

while AETERNIT IMPERI was stamped on the coinage of Philippus II and Carus.¹⁵⁷

Apart from these three iconographical types, Sol holds other 'functions' which, although less widespread, are certainly not negligible. Under Septimius Severus, Caracalla, Aurelian and Florian, Sol functions as *pacator orbis*, whereas, from 260 onward, Sol receives the epithet *invictus* on the coins of Gallienus, Aurelian, Quintillus, and Probus.¹⁵⁸ Both appellations have a military connotation and are linked to each other. After all, victory and peace were intimately connected.¹⁵⁹ Sol, however, did not have the exclusive right to appear as *pacator orbis* and *invictus* on third-century coinage. Jupiter, Aurelian, Probus, and Numerian appear as *pacator orbis* too, while, apart from Sol, other gods (Jupiter, Hercules, and Mars) received the epithet *invictus*.¹⁶⁰ The latter epithet was also used for the emperor, but it appears irregularly and its presence on coins was often due to a special occasion.¹⁶¹ Because both *pacator orbis* and *invictus* were associated with peace and invincibility, they refer to *saeculum aureum* and can therefore be linked to *oriens Augusti* and *aeternitas Augusti/imperii*.¹⁶²

There are other third-century solar coin types which are rare and therefore of exceptional character. First, the emperor Elagabalus issued a type that bears the legend SOLI PROPVGNATORI and portrays a radiated Sol holding the attribute of Jupiter, the thunderbolt.¹⁶³ In view of the fact that the Syrian sun god Elagabal obtained the most prominent

¹⁵⁷ Di Vita-Evrard, "Probus, Aeternus Augustus", p. 232. According to the latter, the propagation of *Aeternitas Augusti* can be linked to vows regarding the continuity of the particular emperors (e.g. *vota decennialia*), see *ibid.*, pp. 235–37. AETERNITAS AVG/AVGG: *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, nos. 211, 228, 229, 232; *RIC* V.1 Gallienus joint reign, nos. 302, 373; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 24, 99, 160, 348, 465–466, 555, 629, 630; *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 16, 17, 115, 116, 198; *RIC* V.1, Aurelian, nos. 20, 44; *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 3, 21, 22, 134, 135, 168. AETERNIT IMPERI: *RIC* IV.3, Philippus II, no. 226; *RIC* V.2, Carus, no. 35.

¹⁵⁸ *Pacator orbis*: *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, no. 282; *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 163; *RIC* V.1, Aurelian, nos. 6, 7; *RIC* V.1, Florian, nos. 7, 8, 9. *Invictus*: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 639, 640; *RIC* V.1, Aurelian, nos. 54, 77, 78, 154, 257, 307–315, 387, 390, 417, 419; *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 101, 138, 199–209, 417, 311, 414–416, 418–422, 597, 767–785, 829, 861–874, 911.

¹⁵⁹ See above, pp. 119–120.

¹⁶⁰ Jupiter as *pacator orbis*: *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, no. 218; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 294. Emperor as *pacator orbis*: *RIC* V.1, Aurelian, no. 4; *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 136, 591; *RIC* V.2, Numerian, no. 390. Jupiter *Invictus*: *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 480a), 480b). Hercules *Invictus*: *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, no. 50. Mars *Invictus*: *RIC* V.1, Aurelian, nos. 357–359. See further Berrens, *Sonnenkult und Kaisertum*, p. 195.

¹⁶¹ Berrens, *Sonnenkult und Kaisertum*, p. 190. Use of the epithet *invictus* for the emperor on the reverses of third-century coin types: *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 356, 389–395, 441, 441A; *RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, nos. 86–88, 191, 350, 351; *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 451–456; *RIC* V.2, Carus, no. 117.

¹⁶² Berrens, *Sonnenkult und Kaisertum*, p. 80.

¹⁶³ *RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, no. 198.

place in Elagabalus' ideology (see 3.7.1), this coin type's depiction of a sun god with the chief god's attribute might be interpreted as an attempt to introduce Rome to the foreign sun god by using the (for Romans) familiar sun god Sol.¹⁶⁴ Second, types were struck that bear the legend PROVIDENTIA DEORVM and display an image of Sol. They are only common in the period 270–282: no types of this kind are attested at any other time in the century. On these coins of Aurelian, Tacitus, Florian, and Probus, Sol is depicted together with the personification Providentia.¹⁶⁵ On the majority of Aurelian's coin types proclaiming PROVIDENTIA DEORVM with an image of Sol, however, Fides (accompanied by two military ensigns) instead of Providentia is standing next to Sol.¹⁶⁶ In this way trust in the success of military activities undertaken by the emperor was propagated. Sol seems to guarantee success. On all these coin types with either Providentia or Fides, the favor of the gods seems to depend heavily on one god in particular: Sol.¹⁶⁷ It is probable that in these cases Tacitus, Florian and Probus continued Aurelian's 'religious policy' (see 3.7.2) in which Sol played the most prominent role.¹⁶⁸

5.2 Apollo

Apollo was originally not solely a sun god, but also a god of healing, music, divination, beauty, and agriculture.¹⁶⁹ Moreover, as mentioned, Augustus granted Apollo a special political significance.¹⁷⁰ It is, however, difficult and sometimes impossible to distinguish between Apollo's various functions on coinage. Therefore, although Apollo is included in the section on sun gods in order to examine a possible correlation between the appearances of Sol and Apollo on coins, it does not imply that Apollo always appears in his guise of sun god on the coin types mentioned below.

Three iconographical types of Apollo are dominant on third-century imperial coinage. First, as was the case with Sol, Apollo appears frequently

¹⁶⁴ See further Manders, "Religion and coinage", p. 130.

¹⁶⁵ *RIC* V.1, Aurelian, nos. 19, 189; *RIC* V.1, Tacitus, nos. 52, 53, 195–198; *RIC* V.1, Florian, nos. 110–113; *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 844–850.

¹⁶⁶ *RIC* V.1, Aurelian, nos. 152, 153, 256, 284, 285.

¹⁶⁷ Jupiter is connected with *providentia deorum* as well, but only on the coins of Tacitus (*RIC* V.1, Tacitus, nos. 54, 212).

¹⁶⁸ Aurelian's preference for the sun god will be discussed below, pp. 150–154.

¹⁶⁹ On the cult of Apollo in Rome, see Gagé, *Apollon romain*. On the god Apollo, see for instance Graf, *Apollo*.

¹⁷⁰ See above, pp. 122 and 125 with n. 130. See further Strazzulla, *Il principato di Apollo and Gurval, Actium and Augustus*.

with his attributes, branch and lyre, but without a legend which could be helpful in determining Apollo's function; this iconographical type appears on the coins of Septimius Severus, Caracalla, Gordian III, Gallienus and Aurelian.¹⁷¹ Second, also like Sol, Apollo acts as imperial protector in the second half of the third century. He is portrayed as Apollo Conservator on the coins of Aemilian, Valerian, Gallienus, Claudius Gothicus, Quintillus, and Aurelian.¹⁷² Third, Apollo appears as healing god; on the coins of Trebonianus Gallus, Volusian, Aemilian, and Valerian an appeal was made to Apollo Salutaris.¹⁷³ This particular appearance of Apollo on the coins of these four emperors can probably be linked to the plague which terrorized the Roman Empire again in the 250s and 260s.¹⁷⁴ Finally, on other coin types of Gallienus and Claudius Gothicus displaying an image of Apollo in combination with the legend SALVS AVG, the god is also invoked to vouchsafe the health of the reigning emperor.¹⁷⁵ Claudius Gothicus, however, fell victim to this disease.

In contrast with the three types of references to Apollo mentioned above, there are also references to this deity which appear less frequently on third-century coins. Some of them seem to have been deployed only on special occasions and therefore they might hint at imperial reactions to specific circumstances. Apollo Propugnator is invoked on coins of Valerian and Gallienus which are dated to 253, 253–4 and 255–6; they probably hail military activities against Valerian's predecessor Aemilian and Germanic tribes.¹⁷⁶ The legend APOLLINI PAL appears on Gallienus' coinage

¹⁷¹ *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 47, 51, 59; *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 238A, 254, 255; *RIC* IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 87–90, 96, 102–104, 114, 119, 301a)–304c); *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 6, 7; *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, no. 157. As already said, on Gallienus' coins Apollo appears with Sol's whip (see above, p. 125). On Septimius Severus' coins with a legend which consists either of APOLLINI AVGVSTO or of standard imperial titulature, Apollo carries, next to his lyre, a *patera* (APOLLINI AVGVSTO: *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 40, 345, 682, 699; legend consisting of standard imperial titulature: *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 47, 51, 59).

¹⁷² *RIC* IV.3, Aemilianus, nos. 1, 43; *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, nos. 32, 71–73, 83–85, 152, 190; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 125, 126, 127, 129, 205, 206, 251, 261–263, 374, 416, 425; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 26, 163–169, 382, 407, 415, 467, 468, 558, 559; *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 2, 20–23; *RIC* V.1, Quintillus, nos. 9, 44; *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, nos. 22, 23, 66, 160–162, 243.

¹⁷³ *RIC* IV.3, Trebonianus Gallus, nos. 5, 19, 32, 103–104b); *RIC* IV.3, Volusianus, nos. 188, 247–248b); *RIC* IV.3, Aemilianus, no. 27; *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, no. 76.

¹⁷⁴ See above, pp. 17–18.

¹⁷⁵ *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 610; *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 97, see below, p. 216.

¹⁷⁶ *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, nos. 74, 75, 153; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 128. See below, p. 284.

from his sole reign.¹⁷⁷ This coin type seems to refer indirectly to Augustus, who dedicated a temple to Apollo Palatinus next to his house on the Palatine Hill in Rome. This reference to Augustus on Gallienus' coins seems to have been no coincidence: the emperor more often referred (directly) to Augustus on coins issued during his sole reign.¹⁷⁸ Apparently, Gallienus wanted to associate himself explicitly with the first *princeps*.

Exceptional Apollo types were also issued in the reigns of Geta and Caracalla.¹⁷⁹ During Geta's brief reign coins were struck on which Caracalla and Geta clasp hands while being crowned together by Hercules and Apollo.¹⁸⁰ The legends of these coins consist of standard imperial titulature. Caracalla issued types displaying the same image but bearing the legend CONCORDIAE AVGG.¹⁸¹ In addition to these types, some of Caracalla's and Geta's coins display the same message but with an image of Victoria instead of Hercules.¹⁸² On all these types, Apollo appears as the 'peacekeeper', the guarantor of the *Concordia Augustorum*. Yet, this divine guarantee could not save Geta.

The god Apollo was not only linked to the imperial dynasty in the first decade of the third century, but also in 251, as the coinage of Decius' two sons Herennius Etruscus and Hostilian shows.¹⁸³ This time he did not act as guardian of imperial harmony, but was directly linked to both Herennius Etruscus and Hostilian, *principes iuventutis*. The god seemed to have been of special significance to both princes, just as Septimius Severus and Quintillus claimed a special relation with Apollo by putting APOLLINI AVGVSTO on their coins.¹⁸⁴

6. THE EMPEROR AS SACERDOS

The most obvious ways of propagating the emperor's religious status on third-century reverse types are depictions of the emperor carrying the attributes of a priest or performing a sacrifice (*image 10*). In this way, the

¹⁷⁷ APOLLINI PAL: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 631. For more coins referring to Apollo Palatinus see *MIR* 18, nos. 805–807.

¹⁷⁸ See below, pp. 299–300.

¹⁷⁹ See also above, p. 113.

¹⁸⁰ *RIC* IV.1, Geta, nos. 155a) and 155b).

¹⁸¹ *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 459, 508a), 508b), 508c).

¹⁸² *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 537; *RIC* IV.1, Geta, no. 184.

¹⁸³ *RIC* IV.3, Herennius Etruscus, nos. 153a), 153b); *RIC* IV.3, Hostilianus, nos. 189, 219.

¹⁸⁴ *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 40, 345, 682, 699; *RIC* V.1, Quintillus, no. 8.



Image 10 Emperor as *sacerdos* (RIC IV.2, Severus Alexander, no. 50)

emperors could directly communicate their piety. In the third century, this imagery on coinage became subject to change.

On the majority of the imperial coin types displaying the emperor as a priest, the emperor, often veiled, performs a sacrifice while holding a *patera* over an altar or a tripod.¹⁸⁵ These images confirm the impression that the emperor was the highest ‘religious authority’ since he is virtually the only person who is represented conducting sacrifice on Roman public monuments, coins included.¹⁸⁶ In her *Augustus et sacerdos*, Stepper argues, however, that the emperor is not necessarily depicted as a priest on sacrificial scenes; according to Stepper sacrificial scenes could present the emperor also as a magistrate, since magistrates could perform sacrifices as well.¹⁸⁷ Yet, the emperor could not be depicted either as a magistrate or as a priest on sacrificial scenes but as both, since religion and politics were intertwined.¹⁸⁸ Nevertheless, it is clear that on these scenes the emphasis lies on the emperor fulfilling his ‘religious duties’ as a priest and

¹⁸⁵ On technical aspects of images displaying the emperor as a priest, see R. Gordon, “The veil of power: emperors, sacrificers and benefactors” in: M. Beard and J. North eds., *Pagan Priests. Religion and Power in the Ancient World* (New York, 1999), pp. 199–231.

¹⁸⁶ M. Beard, J. North and S. Price, *Religions of Rome. Volume I: A History* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 186.

¹⁸⁷ Stepper, *Augustus et sacerdos*, pp. 105–6.

¹⁸⁸ Stepper, *Augustus et sacerdos*, pp. 105–6. In addition, although it seems obvious that the emperor on these coins is depicted in his role as *pontifex maximus*, head of the most important priestly office, we cannot be absolutely sure that this is the case. Therefore, I would prefer to consider those depictions images of the emperor as a priest in general, a *sacerdos*, and not, to be more specific, as images of the emperor as *pontifex maximus*.

not on the emperor as a magistrate. The emperor was, after all, enrolled in priestly colleges and had the exclusive right to play a leading role in sacrificial scenes. In addition, the emperor could be depicted as a magistrate in innumerable ways; representing the emperor while he is performing a sacrifice was certainly not the most recognizable way.

On some coin types the actual act of sacrificing is not visible; these types portray either the emperor veiled or the emperor with the usual attributes needed for a sacrifice (altar/tripod, *patera*) or both. In any case, these types emphasize the emperor's priestly role, as do coins displaying the act of sacrificing performed by the emperor.

When we look at figure 23, we can see that the representation of the emperor as *sacerdos* through depictions on third-century coins was subject to wide fluctuations.

Twenty third-century emperors coined images of themselves as *sacerdos*.¹⁸⁹ This way of representing the emperor as a priest was more common in the first half of the century. On the other hand, the number of coin types displaying images of the emperor as a priest increased after Trebonianus Gallus' reign and climaxed under Aemilian. Thereafter, a decrease is visible. They even disappeared from imperial coinage after Claudius Gothicus' reign. Only on the coins of Carinus and Numerian did imagery of the emperor as *sacerdos* reappear, albeit on a small scale. Thus, in the second half of the third century, the emperor was only incidentally depicted as a priest on the imperial coinage struck before Trebonianus

¹⁸⁹ *RIC* IV.1, Pertinax, nos. 13a), 13b), 24, 31A, 39; *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 96a), 96b), 128, 129, 140, 140A, 149, 151, 160, 167a)–168b), 172, 186, 188, 289, 293, 293A, 306, 309, 310, 413, 512A, 519, 730, 736, 753, 755, 761, 789, 798, 814, 816a), 816b), 821, 831–832b), (possibly 307, 308; on nos. 321B and 329 a prince is shown while sacrificing); *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 41, 68, 105, 150, 151, 178–180, 204, 205, 211, 249, 250, 270a)–272b), 323, 344, 441A, 444, 452a), 452b), 462, 478a), 478b), 482, 513, 517, 523, (possibly also 418; on no. 181 Septimius Severus is sacrificing)); *RIC* IV.1, Geta, nos. 93, 156a), 156b), 164, 170, 187a)–188, 192; *RIC* IV.2, Macrinus, no. 81; *RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, nos. 24, 46–53, 86–88, 131–135, 146, 147, 177–179, 181, 191, 194, 200, 202, 203, 307, 323–330, 334–336, 350, 351, 369–371; *RIC* IV.2, Severus Alexander, nos. 49, 50, 54, 55, 68–70, 81, 195, 273, 297, 401, 437, 438, 446, 447, 469, 485, 468, 470, 484, 486, 487, 55, 556; *RIC* IV.2, Maximinus Thrax, no. 112; *RIC* IV.2, Gordianus I, no. 8; *RIC* IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 37, 43, 46, 54, 59, 68, 69, 72–74, 76, 77, 137A, 139A, 169, 271, 280, 291–292c), 324; *RIC* IV.3, Philippus I, nos. 75B, 76, 76A, 77A–79b); *RIC* IV.3, Philippus II, nos. 234, 236; *RIC* IV.3, Trebonianus Gallus, nos. 3, 100; *RIC* IV.3, Volusianus, nos. 138, 139, 141, 245; *RIC* IV.3, Aemilianus, nos. 7, 7A, 16–18, 36A, 47a), 47b); *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, nos. 26, 28, 29, 140, 208, 284, 285; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 65, 66, 118, 123, 124, 287, 306–309, 446, 447; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 4, 153, 171, 171a, 458–462, 618, (possibly 196); *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 188, 189; *RIC* V.2, Carinus, nos. 315, 316; *RIC* V.2, Numerianus, no. 461. Not all these coin types belong to the category 'divine association', see above p. 52.

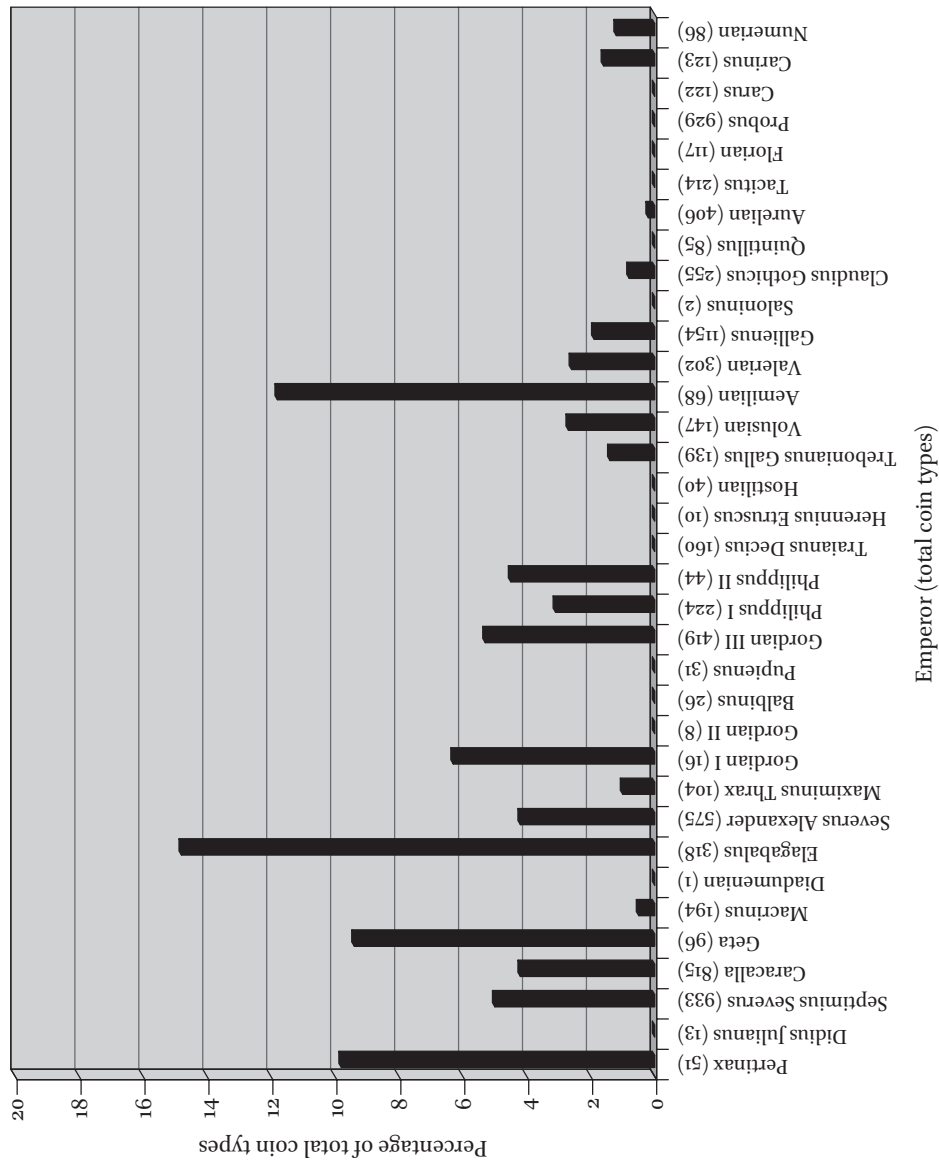


Figure 23 Proportions of coin types portraying the emperor as sacerdos per emperor

Gallus' and after Claudius Gothicus' reign. Peaks come in the reigns of Elagabalus and Aemilian. Whereas the high percentage on Aemilian's coins is difficult to explain, the high percentage covering Elagabalus' reign can be attributed to the emperor's status as *sacerdos dei Solis Elagabali*.¹⁹⁰

In most cases, images of the emperor as a priest appear on the coinage of the emperors who were raising sons destined to be their successors. This correlation between the representation of the emperor as a priest and the intended successor is not unexpected; *caesares* were introduced to the priestly office early in their career.¹⁹¹ Only Decius and his sons seem to form an exception; neither Decius nor his sons are represented as *sacerdos* on their coins.¹⁹² Although the virtue *pietas* appeared on their coins to a limited extent, Decius, Herennius Etruscus, and Hostilian thus fell outside the general tendency regarding *sacerdos* types.¹⁹³ In the case of Decius, he seems to have considered the communication of military and geographical messages more relevant during the period in which he held sway over the Empire.¹⁹⁴

After the reign of Claudius Gothicus, images representing the emperor as a priest disappeared from the coinage, as was the case with Decius and his sons as well. Only at the end of the period 193–284, during the reigns of Carinus and Numerian, do they briefly reappear again, be it on a small scale.

In addition to depicting the emperor as a priest, the religious status of the emperor could be propagated on reverse types by including the title *pontifex maximus* in imperial titulature. As it was in previous periods, this was a normal practice in the third century. However, a remarkable case can be found. It is striking that the function of *pontifex maximus* is promoted on the coins of both Pupienus and Balbinus, which indicates that two *pontifices maximi* were presiding over the *pontifices* at the same

¹⁹⁰ *Sacerdos dei Solis Elagabali*: RIC IV.2, Elagabalus, nos. 131–135, 194, 369–371.

¹⁹¹ Stepper, *Augustus et sacerdos*, p. 24.

¹⁹² One coin type of Herennius Etruscus shows the priestly emblems together with the legend PIETAS AVGG which could symbolize the cooptation of Decius' son in a priestly college. This coin type, however, was minted when Herennius Etruscus was already Augustus whereas Büsing speaks about these kinds of coin types in relation to the cooptation of a Caesar in the pontifical college. See H. Büsing, "Zum pontifikalen Aspekt römischer Münzen", in: G. Erath et al. eds., *Komos. Festschrift für Thuri Lorenz zum 65. Geburtstag* (Vienna, 1997), pp. 37–45; 44. See also p. 181 with n. 115.

¹⁹³ See also below, p. 262.

¹⁹⁴ See below, p. 255

time.¹⁹⁵ This unique situation is confirmed by the literary and epigraphic sources.¹⁹⁶

Although *pontifex maximus* as part of the imperial titulature is inscribed on the coinage of the majority of third-century emperors, the number of types on which the title *pontifex maximus* is visible varies. In general (apart from the reigns of Decius, his sons, and Saloninus), references to *pontifex maximus* decreased from Claudius Gothicus' rule onward. It is however difficult to value this decline properly. After all, in the second half of the third century, imperial titulature as a whole was less often inscribed on reverse types. Nevertheless, this does not diminish the fact that a change occurred in the propagation of *pontifex maximus* from the reign of Claudius Gothicus onward. This decline in references to the title *pontifex maximus* runs almost parallel to the change in the depiction of the emperor as a priest; depictions of the emperor as a priest nearly disappeared after Claudius Gothicus' reign and references to *pontifex maximus* declined from the rule of Claudius Gothicus onward.

When, after discussing the image of the emperor as a priest, the reality of the emperor as a priest is taken into account, a turning point is visible at roughly the same time. From the reign of Quintillus onward, the successor of Claudius Gothicus, a change took place in the participation of the emperor in priestly colleges.

Regarding the cooptation of the emperor in priestly colleges, as with so many things, Augustus paved the way. He accumulated religious offices which passed automatically into the hands of his successors. Thanks to Augustus' *Res Gestae*, we know exactly which priestly colleges included him as a member; the *pontifices*, *augures*, *quindecimviri sacris faciundis*, *septemviri epulorum*, *fratres arvales*, *sodales Titii*, and the *fetiales*.¹⁹⁷ Furthermore, as the years passed the emperors (and other prominent members of the imperial family as well) became members of various *sodalitates* for the worship of their deified predecessors.¹⁹⁸

Before the reign of Quintillus in the third century, the situation was not very different; almost every emperor was head of the *pontifices* and a

¹⁹⁵ *RIC* IV.2, Balbinus, nos. 5, 6, 16–18 and *RIC* IV.2, Pupienus, nos. 5, 6, 15, 16.

¹⁹⁶ *HA, Maximus et Balbinus* 8.1; *CIL* 8,10365=ILS 496.

¹⁹⁷ *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* 7. Yet, Augustus became head of the *pontifices*, *pontifex maximus*, only after Lepidus' death in 12 B.C. See especially J. Scheid, "Augustus and Roman religion: continuity, conservatism, and innovation", in: K. Galinsky, *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Augustus* (Cambridge, 2005), pp. 175–193; pp. 187–192.

¹⁹⁸ F.G.B. Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World 31 BC–AD 337*, 2nd edition (London, 1992), p. 355.

member of the *augures*, *quindecimviri sacris faciundis*, *epulones*, *arvales*, *sodales Augustales*, and the *sodales Antoniniani*.¹⁹⁹ However, from A.D. 55 the *sodales Titii* did not include the emperor as a member anymore while, from A.D. 201 onward, the *sodales Titii* are no longer listed in Rüpke's *Fasti sacerdotum*.²⁰⁰ In addition, Geta was the last third-century emperor who belonged to the *fetiales*. In contrast, some emperors in the third century (Caracalla, Macrinus, Diadumenian, Elagabalus, Severus Alexander, Maximinus Thrax) were members of the *sacerdotes sive sodales aedis Iovis propugnatoris* and Elagabalus acted furthermore as *flamen dialis* and *sacerdos amplissimus dei invicti Solis Elagabali*.

The duties of the seven priestly colleges to which almost every emperor from Augustus until Quintillus belonged, varied. The college of *pontifices* was highest in the priestly hierarchy. Pontifical duties were extensive, so that even judicial aspects were inherent to them.²⁰¹ In general, they supervised all ritual prescriptions in Rome. The *augures* predicted the future by means of omens (thunder, lightning, birds' flight and behavior), and magistrates consulted them with regard to important state affairs. The college of *quindecimviri sacris faciundis* dealt with foreign cults in Rome and consulted the Sibylline books when the senate had to take an important decision. The *septemviri epulonum* administered ritual meals in honor of the gods during particular feasts. The twelve *fratres arvales* were priests for life who led the worship of Dea Dia, a fertility goddess, and sacrifices to the emperors. Finally, as already mentioned, particular *sodalitates* were concerned with the worship of the deified emperors.²⁰²

When we consider the various tasks of these particular priestly colleges on the whole, it is evident that they tremendously influenced both Roman understanding of religion and Roman politics. The accumulation of these priestly offices in the hands of one person and the passing down of these memberships from every emperor to his successor, show a unity

¹⁹⁹ In the *fasti sacerdotum* (J. Rüpke, *Fasti sacerdotum. Die Mitglieder der Priesterschaften und das sakrale Funktionspersonal römischer, griechischer, orientalischer und jüdisch-christlicher Kulte in der Stadt Rom von 300 v. Chr. Bis 499 n.Chr. Teil 1: Jahres- und Kollegienlisten* (Stuttgart, 2005), pp. 479–484) the emperors from Quintillus onward are no longer listed as members of priestly colleges other than the *pontifices*. See below, p. 141 with n. 211.

²⁰⁰ Rüpke, *Fasti sacerdotum* 1, pp. 214 and 410.

²⁰¹ Stepper separates priestly and judicial tasks (Stepper, *Augustus et sacerdos*, p. 18), whereas, in my view, the judicial tasks must be considered together with the priestly duties on the whole.

²⁰² The list of priestly duties is derived from Stepper, *Augustus et sacerdos*, pp. 18–21 and Augustus, *Res Gestae Divi Augusti: The Achievements of the Divine Augustus*, 2nd edition (translated by P.A. Brunt and J.M. Moore, London 1979).

of religious power in general in the emperor's person.²⁰³ The *princeps*' influence on public aspects of Roman religious life must thus have been enormous. Letters sent to the emperor by his subjects with questions concerning 'religious matters' seem to confirm this.²⁰⁴ Pliny, for instance, wrote Trajan to consult him on the matter of moving a tomb.²⁰⁵ These letters show not only that the emperor and his subjects interacted over religious matters, but also that, apparently, the emperor was considered the head of Roman religion by (at least some groups of) the Roman people.

The latter is probably mainly due to the emperor's position as *pontifex maximus*. Although all the other priesthoods contributed to the high religious status of the emperor, the office of *pontifex maximus* can be labeled 'the key priestly office'. The importance of this religious office manifested itself mainly in the inclusion of *pontifex maximus* in official imperial titlature and the emperor's monopolization of this position (no other *pontifex* could become head of the *pontifices*). In this way, the significance of this office was communicated to the Roman subjects, whereas no emphasis was laid on the other priesthoods.

Yet, it seems difficult to pin down *why* the office of *pontifex maximus* was such a valuable position compared to the other priestly offices. In effect, this office offered no substantial legal advantages, while, theoretically, it entailed only presiding over a single major board of priests, the *pontifices*.²⁰⁶ Stepper offers a possible solution for this problem. First, she attributes increasing political significance to the office, a development which had its roots in the Republic:²⁰⁷

Im Unterschied zum Magistrat amtierte der *pontifex maximus* – wie die Mehrzahl der römischen *sacerdotes* – sein Leben lang und konnte neben

²⁰³ See Cass. Dio 53.17.8: 'By virtue of being consecrated in all the priesthoods and of their right to bestow most of these positions upon others, as well as from the fact that, even if two or three persons hold the imperial office at the same time, one of them is high priest, they hold in their own hands supreme authority over all matters both profane and sacred' (ἐκ τε τοῦ ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ἱερωσύναις ἱερωσθαι καὶ προσέτι καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις τὰς πλείους σφῶν διδίνειν, ἀρχιέρεων τέ τινα αὐτῶν, καὶν δύο καὶν τρεῖς ἅμα ἀρχωσιν, εἶναι, πάντων αὐτοὶ καὶ τῶν ὁσίων καὶ τῶν ἱερῶν κυριεύουσιν).

²⁰⁴ Millar, *Emperor in the Roman World*, p. 361.

²⁰⁵ Pliny, *Epistulae* 10.68–9: *Potentibus quibusdam, ut sibi reliquias suorum, aut propter iniuriam vetustatis aut propter fluminis incursum aliaque his similia quaecumque secundum exemplum proconsulum transferre permitterem, quia sciebam in urbe nostra ex eius modi causis collegium pontificum adiri solere, te, domine, maximum pontificem consulendum putavi, quid observare me velis.*

²⁰⁶ R. Stepper, *Augustus et sacerdos*, p. 15.

²⁰⁷ Julius Caesar became *pontifex maximus* in 63 B.C.

dem Prestigegewinn, den ihm dieses Amt sicherte, gewisse pontifikale Zuständigkeiten zu seinen eigenen Gunsten als politisch aktives Mitglied der römischen Aristokratie nutzen.²⁰⁸

Second, Stepper argues that a charismatic aspect was intrinsic to the office of *pontifex maximus*, which contributed to the importance of the office.²⁰⁹ However, she seems to ignore the fact that both the political significance and the charismatic aspect were inherent in the majority of priestly offices, in any case not specifically in the office of *pontifex maximus*. Therefore, instead of solving the problem of why the *pontifex maximus* was such an important office, Stepper seems to answer the question why Roman priesthoods in general were worth aiming for.

As to the importance of the office of *pontifex maximus*, it seems that the office of *pontifex maximus* gained significance over the years.²¹⁰ In the Republic the *pontifex maximus* was merely the head of the *pontifices*. Caesar's striving for the position demonstrates that at the time of the Late Republic the function of *pontifex maximus* was already considered an important position. From Augustus onward, the title of *pontifex maximus* seems to have become identified with the head of Roman state religion. The title's essential position in imperial titulature illustrates this point. Thus, the increased symbolic value of this function may explain why the *pontifex maximus* remained such an important office.

Nevertheless, imperial participation in priestly colleges declined drastically after Quintillus' reign. From Quintillus onward, the emperors seem no longer to have been coopted in priestly colleges except for the *pontifices*.²¹¹ This sudden neglect of *cooptatio in omnia collegia* remained consistent in the last third of the third century and in the fourth century.

²⁰⁸ Stepper, *Augustus et sacerdos*, pp. 15–16.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

²¹⁰ S.R.F. Price, "The place of religion: Rome in the early Empire", in: A.K. Bowman, E. Champlin and A. Lintott, *CAH 10: The Augustan Empire, 43 B.C.–A.D. 69* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 812–847; pp. 825–827.

²¹¹ This observation is based on an independent research on members of priestly colleges and cults in Rome (300 B.C.–A.D. 499) carried out by Rüpke (see *Fasti sacerdotum* 1, pp. 479–484). Although the evidence is less comprehensive from 238 onward (J. Rüpke, *Fasti sacerdotum. Die Mitglieder der Priesterschaften und das sakrale Funktionspersonal römischer, griechischer, orientalischer und jüdisch-christlicher Kulte in der Stadt Rom von 300 v. Chr. Bis 499 n.Chr. Teil 3: Quellenkunde und Organisationsgeschichte, Bibliographie, Register* (Stuttgart, 2005), p. 1604), the trend is undeniable. Stepper (Stepper, *Augustus et sacerdos*, p. 14) also observes this sudden change in cooptation but does not mark it as significant.

The emperor's withdrawal from all priestly colleges besides the *pontifices* corresponds to a twofold change in the imperial image communicated by coins, namely the disappearance of depictions of the emperor as priest and a decline in references to the title *pontifex maximus*. Since these three changes occurred in roughly the same period and remained in place thereafter, it would seem that they did not simply result from individually made decisions of various emperors. They must have been part of a greater development.

When we look at the coins from the Tetrarchic period, the same picture emerges; images of the emperor as a priest and references to *pontifex maximus* are scarce on the coinage, while the emperors no longer belonged to different priestly colleges. What changed during the first Tetrarchy was the institutionalization of the so-called '*Romferne*'.²¹² Already in the third century, the majority of the emperors spent most of their time in the provinces (because of the military situation there) and seldom visited the capital.²¹³ As for all emperors reigning in the second half of the third century, only Gallienus spent a relatively long period in Rome during his emperorship; he resided in the *urbs* from the end of 260 until he left for Greece in, presumably, the beginning of 265.²¹⁴ There were even short-lived emperors, such as Florian and probably also Aemilian and Quintillus, who never saw Rome during the period in which they ruled the Empire.²¹⁵ Thus, although Rome was still considered the symbolic center of the Empire, as the high number of third-century coins propagating ROMA AETERNA suggests, the *urbs aeterna* was clearly losing its position of primacy within the Empire.²¹⁶ The Tetrarchs confirmed this development by residing officially in Trier, Nicomedia, Sirmium and Milan instead of Rome.

²¹² '*Romferne*' (or 'prolonged absence from Rome'): Stepper, *Augustus et sacerdos*, pp. 249–255. See also Hedlund, "...achieved nothing worthy of memory.", pp. 124ff and E. Mayer, *Rom ist dort, wo der Kaiser ist. Untersuchungen zu den Staatsdenkmälern des dezentralisierten Reiches von Diocletian bis zu Theodosius II* (Mainz, 2002).

²¹³ For an overview of the emperors' travels in the third century, see Halfmann, *Itinera principum*, pp. 216–242.

²¹⁴ Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle*, p. 218; Hedlund, "achieved nothing worthy of memory", p. 124; Halfmann, *Itinera principum*, pp. 237–38.

²¹⁵ Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle*, pp. 212, 233, 252; Halfmann, *Itinera principum*, pp. 236 and 240.

²¹⁶ On Rome as the (symbolic) center of the world, see Aristides *Oratio* 26 and Ovid, *Fasti* 2.684: *Romanae spatium est urbis et orbis idem* ('The circuit of Rome is the circuit of the world'); C. Edwards and G. Woolf, *Rome the Cosmopolis* (Cambridge, 2003). On Rome in the third century, see for instance J. Curran, *Pagan City and Christian Capital* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 3–42 and on building projects in third-century Rome see especially F. Kolb, *Rom*.

As Stepper rightly asserts, the 'devaluation' of Rome as the imperial center went hand in hand with a decreasing significance of the traditions and institutions directly connected with the city of Rome. Obviously, the priestly colleges belonged to these institutions.²¹⁷ Consequently, the declining importance of Rome must have affected the emperor's performance as *pontifex maximus* and, more generally, the cooptation of the emperor in the other priestly colleges.²¹⁸

Thus, the emperors' gradual alienation from Rome from the third century and thereafter inspired changes in the image and reality of the emperor as a priest.²¹⁹ Meanwhile, a related development, namely an increasing sacralization of imperial power, helps to explain the changes in the representation of the emperor as a priest and the cooptation of the ruler in the priestly colleges. The emperor was absent from Rome and therefore not visible to the city's inhabitants. Consequently, the emperor's person became more abstract to the population of the *urbs*. This invisibility, then, would have enhanced the emperor's status; after all, invisibility can be seen as the greatest display of superior status.²²⁰ The divine status of the Chinese Emperors in the Forbidden City is illustrative for this point.

The invisibility of the emperor exposed him to sacralization. The process of sacralization works, however, in both directions. It was not only a way for subjects to accommodate themselves to a distant ruler, but, by enhancing their own status in the relation to the divine, the emperors had also found new means of legitimizing their power during a period in which external problems increased and they were alienated, socially and geographically, from Rome itself as well as from the Roman senate.²²¹

Die Geschichte der Stadt in der Antike (Munich, 1995), pp. 643–670. On the relation between the emperor and Rome, see especially Benoist, *Rome, le Prince et la Cité*.

²¹⁷ Stepper, *Augustus et sacerdos*, p. 99.

²¹⁸ The effect of Rome's declining importance on the emperor's function of *pontifex maximus* is also demonstrated by the appointment of a *promagister*, a representative of the emperor as *pontifex maximus*. However, Stepper seems to limit the effects of the '*Rom-ferne*' only to the function of *pontifex maximus* (Stepper, *Augustus et sacerdos*, p. 99).

²¹⁹ However, under the rule of Philippus Arabs the thousandth anniversary of Rome was celebrated, which points to the important position of the capital during this reign.

²²⁰ O. Hekster, "Captured in the gaze of power. Visibility, games and Roman imperial representation", in: O. Hekster and R. Fowler eds., *Imaginary Kings. Royal Images in the Ancient Near East, Greece and Rome* (Munich, 2005), pp. 157–176.

²²¹ Rüpke, *Fasti sacerdotum* 3, pp. 1605–1606. In the second century, too, Roman emperors resided outside Rome for substantial periods of time. Yet third-century conditions were different. Trajan's and Marcus Aurelius' absence from Rome could be explained as the actions of 'normal' Roman generals, whose deeds were furthermore monumentally

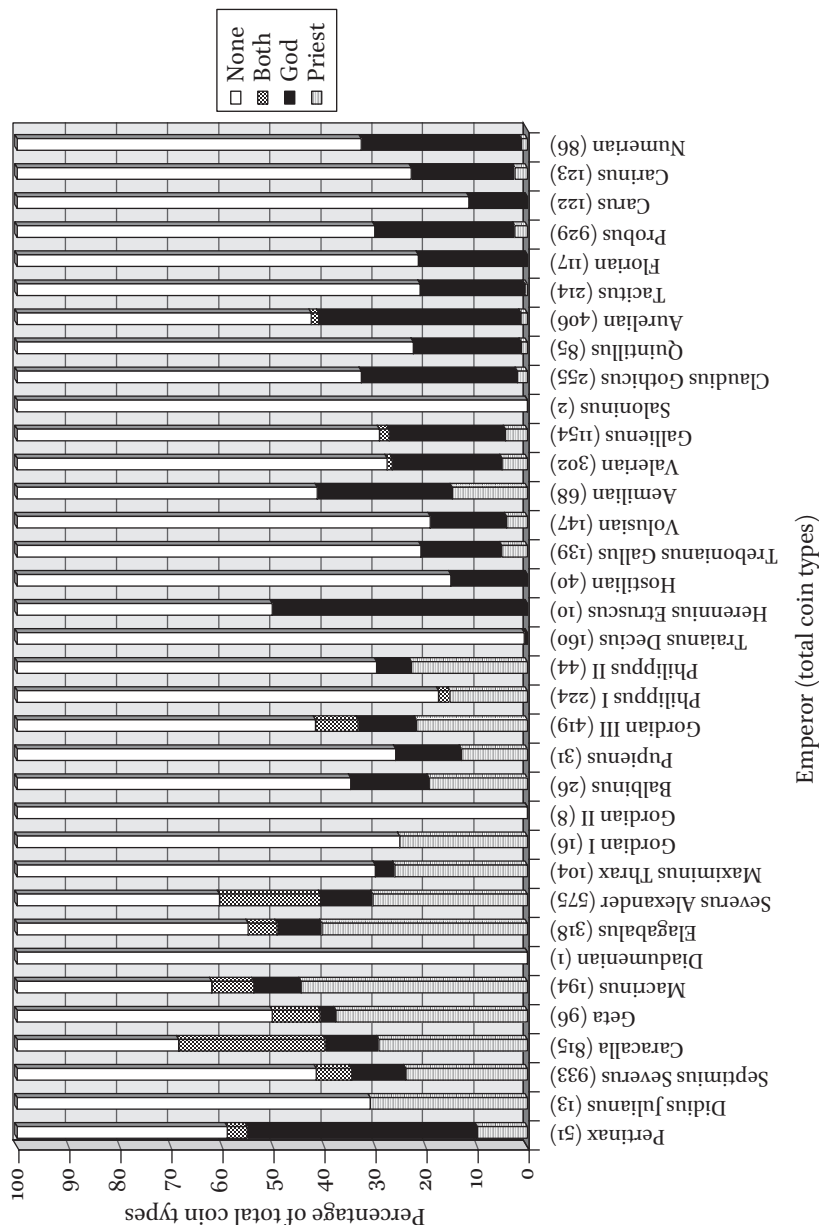


Figure 24 Proportions of coin types referring to divinities per emperor opposed to the coin types referring to the emperor as priest per emperor

From the reign of Quintillus onward, no space was left for the emperor as priest, servant of the gods, in imperial ideology. The latter hypothesis receives support from numismatic evidence.²²²

Figure 24 presents on the one hand the percentages of coin types emphasizing the emperor's priestly role by means of references to *pontifex maximus* in the coin's legend and depictions of the emperor as a priest. On the other hand, the percentages of types referring to divinities are reproduced. Coin types presenting both kinds of representation are included as well. It is obvious that from the second half of the third century onward, and especially after Gallienus' reign, more attention was paid to gods and less to the representation of the emperor as a priest on imperial coinage. The above graph thus points to an increasing sacralization of imperial power in the second half of the third century, as it is visible on coins through associations of the emperor with deities.²²³ Associating the emperor and his reign with divinities, and thus reducing the distance between god and emperor, seems to have appeared more important than emphasizing the ruler's priestly role, at least after Pertinax' reign. Instead of appearing human, the emperor became godlike.

commemorated within Rome itself. Hadrian, though obviously away from Rome for longer periods of time, resided in his Tivoli villa, within direct range of the city (indeed, with the city as background to his villa) for much of his reign. See also above, p. 74.

²²² Although the (living) emperor appears to have become more sacralized in the second half of the third century, the emperor cult did not gain more prominence in the third century. On the contrary, the cults of the *divi* collapsed in the third century (*pace* F. Herklotz, "Der Kaiserkult", in: Johne, Hartmann and Gerhardt, *Die Zeit der Soldatenkaiser*, pp. 937–948; pp. 947–48). Gradel links this collapse to the absence of emperors from Rome (see I. Gradel, *Emperor Worship and Roman Religion* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 356–369). On the imperial cult in the third century, see also S. Benoist, "Images des dieux, images des hommes. Réflexions sur le 'culte impérial' au III^e siècle", in: M.-H. Quet ed., *La "Crise" de l'Empire romain de Marc Aurèle à Constantin. Mutations, continuités, ruptures* (Paris, 2006), pp. 27–64.

²²³ On the increasing sacralization of the emperor in the second half of the third century, see also Herklotz, "Der Kaiserkult", pp. 944–948 and R. Turcan, "Le culte impérial au III^e siècle", *ANRW* II 16.2 (1978), pp. 996–1084. In both works, even examples of identification of emperors with gods, such as emperors carrying divine attributes, are mentioned. Turcan argues moreover that, when imperial deification increased in the second half of the third century, the cult of Rome faded slightly at the same time (Turcan, "Le culte impérial au III^e siècle", p. 1071). This could imply that changes in the position of Rome and imperial sacralization indeed went hand in hand. Benoist also links the changing position of Rome to the sacralization of imperial power, see Benoist, *Rome, le Prince et la Cité*, p. 348.

7. DIVINE EXCEPTIONS ON THIRD-CENTURY IMPERIAL COINAGE

During the third century, not every god was depicted on equal proportions of imperial coinage. In some emperors' reigns, a specific god received the lion's share of imperial attention as compared with the minor role that other gods were forced to play on the particular emperor's coins. The best examples are the emperor Elagabalus' predilection for the Syrian sun god Elagabal and Aurelian's emphasis on Sol. These two exceptions to general diachronic patterns in divine association in the third century deserve some further discussion.

7.1 *Elagabalus*²²⁴

While casting Jupiter aside, the Syrian emperor Elagabalus made the local Syrian sun god Elagabal head of the Roman pantheon. The emperor himself figured as high priest of the cult of Elagabal and he thus called himself amongst other things *sacerdos dei Solis Elagabali*.²²⁵ This religious alteration, alien to the Roman people, had upset the rather fragile balance of power between emperor and senate as well as between the autocrat and his troops.

Elagabalus' 'religious behavior' in worshipping Elagabal has dominated subsequent assessments of his reign, not only in antiquity but also in modern times. This image largely originates from the few ancient authors who inform us about Elagabalus' reign: Cassius Dio, Herodian and the unknown writer of Elagabalus' life in the *Historia Augusta*. Elagabalus' 'religious excesses' are frequently emphasized in all three works. The image of the young monarch that Dio and the author of the *Historia Augusta* sketch is a compilation of gossip and anecdote. They describe the religious excesses as one of the many oddities that characterized the reign of this child emperor. On the other hand, Herodian interprets Elagabalus' religious behavior more in the light of his cultural background.²²⁶ This does not mean that Herodian offers a balanced view of Elagabalus and

²²⁴ See further Manders, "Religion and coinage"; Icks, *The Crimes of Elagabalus*; Rowan, *Under Divine Auspices*, pp. 207–272.

²²⁵ Cass. Dio 80.11.1. See further Potter, *The Roman Empire at Bay*, p. 156. Elagabalus was the high priest of the cult of the sun god Elagabal and he thus called himself amongst other things *sacerdos dei Solis Elagabali*.

²²⁶ M. Sommer, "Elagabal: Wege zur Konstruktion eines 'schlechten' Kaisers", *SCI* 23 (2004), pp. 95–110; pp. 105–106.



Image 11 Elagabalus as *invictus sacerdos* (RIC IV.2, Elagabalus, no. 86)

his reign. He did not strive for objectivity in his narrative of Elagabalus' emperorship but, like Dio and the author of the *Historia Augusta*, offers biased stories about the emperor.

Imperial coins also testify to the religious reformatations that Elagabalus brought into force. These coin types display either the Syrian sun god in the form of a black conical stone or the emperor fulfilling his priestly duty. The greater proportion refers to the emperor as *invictus sacerdos*, *sacerdos dei soli Elagabali* or *summus sacerdos* (image 11).²²⁷ These coin types that emphasize the priestly status of the emperor can be dated to the period 220–222. At that time, the religious function of the most prominent figure in the Roman Empire was already known; even before his arrival in Rome, Elagabalus had sent a portrait to this city:

So an enormous picture was painted of him as he appeared in public performing as a priest. Also in the picture was a portrait of the Emesene god, to whom he was represented making a favourable sacrifice. The picture was sent to Rome with orders that it should hang right in the middle of the senate house, very high up over the head of the statue of Victory.²²⁸

The portrait made the *baitylos* (the black conical stone representing Elagabal) and the deity Elagabal familiar to the population of the *urbs Roma*. As a matter of fact, just like the other inhabitants of the Empire, they could have known these images already from circulating imperial

²²⁷ INVICTVS SACERDOS AVG: RIC IV.2, Elagabalus, nos. 86, 87, 88, 191, 350, 351; SACERDOS DEI SOLI ELAGABALI: RIC IV.2, Elagabalus, nos. 131, 132, 133, 133A, 133B, 134, 135, 194, 369, 370, 371; SVMMVS SACERDOS: RIC IV.2, Elagabalus, nos. 146, 147, 200.

²²⁸ Herodian 5.5.6–7: ... εἰκόνα μεγίστην γράψας παντός ἑαυτοῦ, οἷος προΐων τε καὶ ἱερουργάν ἑφαίνετο, παραστήσας τε ἐν τῇ/γραφῇ/ τὸν τύπον τοῦ ἐπιχωρίου θεοῦ, ᾧ δὴ καλλιερῶν ἐγγέγραπτο, πέμψας τε ἐς τὴν Ἰρῶμιν, ἐκέλευσεν ἐν τῷ μεσαιτάτῳ τῆς συγκλήτου τόπῳ ὑψηλοτάτῳ τε τὴν εἰκόνα ἀνατεθῆναι ὑπὲρ κεφαλῆς τοῦ ἀγάλματος τῆς νίκης" ...

coins. Baldus dates the coin types bearing the legend SANCT DEO SOLI ELAGABAL, minted in Antioch, to Elagabalus' journey to the west in 218/219.²²⁹ Unfortunately, the coins with the same legend minted in Rome are undated.²³⁰

Images of the deity Elagabal appear also on coins bearing the legend CONSERVATOR AVG.²³¹ On the basis of two coin types, listed in the *BMCRE*, we may assume that the coins with the *baitylos* as CONSERVATOR AVG can be dated to the period 220–222.²³² In this phase of Elagabalus' reign, in which the emperor operated openly as priest-emperor, the deity Elagabal was portrayed as protector of the emperor.

It is noticeable that the god receives far less emphasis in comparison with the attention paid to the priestly status of the emperor on these unique coins. Presumably, Elagabalus attached more importance to the presentation of himself before the Roman people as priest-emperor than to propagating the worship of his Syrian god among the inhabitants of Rome, the military camps and the Empire at large. The sizeable number of coin types displaying an image of a sacrificing emperor suggests the same. The image of Elagabalus sacrificing emerges on 27 coin types.²³³ The presumed dating of these coins corresponds with the phase of his rule in which Elagabalus operated openly as a priest-emperor (220–222). One coin type portrays a sacrificing Elagabalus for both 219 and 220, 17 coin types with the sacrificing emperor are attested for 221, and six types for 222.²³⁴ Because of this parallelism and the priest-emperor's frequent appearance in oriental clothes on these types, it is probable that these coins were expressing Elagabalus' piety to the Syrian Elagabal and not to the traditional Roman deities.²³⁵ On one coin type, Elagabalus evidently

²²⁹ H.R. Baldus, "Das 'Vorstellungsgemälde' des Heliogabal. Ein bislang unerkanntes numismatisches Zeugnis", *Chiron* 19 (1989), pp. 467–476; p. 473. *RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, nos. 195, 196, 196A, 197.

²³⁰ *RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, nos. 143 and 144.

²³¹ *RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, nos. 61, 62, 64, 65.

²³² *BMCRE* V, Elagabalus, nos. 197–198. See further M. Icks, "Heliogabalus: dienaar van Elagabal, heerser van Rome", *Lampas* 5 (2004), pp. 347–362; p. 355.

²³³ Coin types with an image of a sacrificing Elagabalus and referring to Elagabal (i.e. revolutionary legends concerning the deity Elagabal or Elagabalus as Elagabal's high priest, images of the conical stone) are not included here.

²³⁴ 219: *RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, no. 24; 220: *RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, no. 307; 221: *RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, nos. 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 177, 178, 179, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330; 222: *RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, nos. 52, 53, 181, 334, 335, 336. Undated: *RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, nos. 202 and 203. Two types are not dated.

²³⁵ Elagabalus in oriental garb: *BMCRE* V, Elagabalus, nos. 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 268, 269, 270, 338, 339, 340, 341, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 446S, 449, 454, 455,

addresses the Syrian sun god – the top end of a bull's penis being fixed to Elagabalus' forehead.²³⁶ This communicates the priestly status of the emperor as it was used on imperial coinage immediately after the emperor acquired the priestly title.²³⁷

The emphasis on Elagabalus' priestly status in his coinage does not negate the importance of coins displaying only this emperor's favored deity. The precious metal from which five coin types (four *aurei* and one gold medallion) were struck probably reflects the importance that Elagabalus attached to the deity.²³⁸

As we can see in the graphs presented in the above sections, however, Elagabalus certainly paid attention to other deities on his coinage. Although the coins referring to Olympians constitute a minority, these coins contradict the old proposition that Elagabalus wanted to establish monotheism with Elagabal as sole god.²³⁹ If the young monarch had intended to overthrow the polytheistic Roman religion altogether and to replace it with a monotheistic religion, he would have tried to cover up all polytheistic tracks. The coins referring to the Roman gods and, if we may believe the author of the *Historia Augusta*, the collection of Roman cult objects in the *Heliogabalium* favor a more henotheistic approach by the priest-emperor.²⁴⁰

455*. Dirven argues that Elagabalus' priestly costume does not look like the Syrian priestly costumes. According to her, Elagabalus' unusual outfit was designed to appeal to the soldiers, who wore similar clothes. See L. Dirven, "The emperor's new clothes: a note on Elagabalus' priestly dress", in: S.G. Vashalomidze and L. Greisiger eds., *Der Christliche Orient und seine Umwelt. Gesammelte Studien zu Ehren Jürgen Tubachs anlässlich seines 60. Geburtstag* (Wiesbaden, 2007), pp. 21–36.

²³⁶ *RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, no. 24.

²³⁷ E. Krenzel, "Das sogenannte 'Horn' des Elagabal – Die Spitze eines Stierpenis", *JNG* 47 (1997), pp. 53–72. See further: T. Kaizer, "Kingly priests in the Roman Near East?", in: Hekster and Fowler, *Imaginary Kings*, pp. 177–192. Mattingly refers to it as a 'horn': *RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, no. 24.

²³⁸ *RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, nos. 61, 64, 65, 143, 196A.

²³⁹ Arguing that Elagabalus wanted to establish monotheism are R. de Gourmont, "Préface", in: G. Duviquet ed., *Héliogabale raconté par les historiens grecs et latins* (Paris, 1903), pp. 7–27; p. 7; J.S. Hay, *The Amazing Emperor Heliogabalus* (London, 1911), pp. vi–vii; G.R. Thompson, *Elagabalus. Priest-Emperor of Rome* (Diss. Kansas, 1972), p. 161; G.H. Halsberghe, *The Cult of Sol Invictus* (Leiden, 1972), p. 80.

²⁴⁰ *Heliogabalium*: Herodian 5.5.8 and H.A. Elagabalus 3.4–5. Cult objects in temple: *HA*, *Elag.* 3.4–5. See further Icks, 'Heliogabalus', p. 358. Presumably, the Heliogabalium on the Palatine was originally a temple dedicated to Jupiter Ultor. After Elagabalus' death, Severus Alexander possibly transformed the Heliogabalium in Jupiter's temple again. See Chausson, "VEL IOVI VEL SOLI", pp. 764–65 and *LTUR* 3, p. 10.

7.2 Aurelian

In addition to Elagabal, another sun god received unprecedented prominence on the coins of a specific third-century emperor.²⁴¹ Although Sol occupied a special place on the coinage of some early third-century emperors already, like Severus Alexander, the attention Aurelian paid to Sol on his coins was revolutionary; approximately one fourth of Aurelian's coin types features Sol.²⁴² Moreover, Aurelian issued a special series of coins displaying, instead of the imperial portrait, a bust of Sol on the obverse of the type.²⁴³ These coin types were, however, rare.

Apart from the special Sol series, Aurelian's Sol types are not exceptional. As is described in the above section on this particular sun god, Aurelian's types correspond largely to the Sol types of other third-century rulers.²⁴⁴ Therefore, Watson's statement that Sol had taken Jupiter's place as imperial *conservator* on Aurelian's coins from 273 onward, which, according to this author, hinted at Sol's 'extraordinary representation' during Aurelian's reign, is doubtful; Sol also appears as *conservator Augusti* on the coinage of Elagabalus, Gallienus, Claudius Gothicus, Florian, and Probus.²⁴⁵ The content of the references to Sol on Aurelian's coinage thus did not deviate from the content of allusions to Sol on other third-century imperial coinage. Rather, Aurelian's Sol coins differ in the large proportion of types compared to the percentage of Sol types minted under other emperors.²⁴⁶

²⁴¹ On Aurelian, see also E. Cizek, *L'empereur Aurélien et son temps* (Paris, 1994).

²⁴² Severus Alexander's attention to Sol: '(...) Sol erscheint häufiger als je zuvor auf den Münzrückseiten und wird gegen Ende seiner Regierungszeit fast zum ausschließlichen Münzbild' (M. Clauss, "Sol Invictus Mithras", *Athenaeum* 78 (1990), pp. 423–450; p. 433). See further Manders, "Religion and coinage", p. 131.

²⁴³ These Sol types are not included in the general analysis of third century imperial coin types because the emperor's portrait does not appear on the obverse (see p. 40 with n. 157). See *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, nos. 319, 320, 321, 322.

²⁴⁴ See above, pp. 126–131.

²⁴⁵ See above, p. 127. It is, however, impossible to determine whether Jupiter no longer appeared as *conservator* on Aurelian's coins from 273 onward, because Aurelian's IOVI CONSERVATORI types are not dated in the *RIC*.

²⁴⁶ Percentage of Sol types Aurelian: 23.6%. Percentages of Sol types other emperors: Septimius Severus: 1.3%; Caracalla: 6.6%; Geta: 1%; Elagabalus: 5.3%; Severus Alexander: 8.9%; Gordian III: 2.9%; Philippus II: 2.3%; Valerian: 6.6%; Gallienus: 4.9%; Claudius Gothicus: 5.1%; Quintillus: 3.5%; Tacitus: 2.8%; Florian: 10.3%; Probus: 12.1%; Carus: 1.6%; Carinus: 2.4%; Numerian: 7%. See also the graph on p. 124.

The special Sol series, minted in Serdica, is exceptional. The series consists of four types, all bearing the legend SOL DOMINVS IMPERI ROMANI on the obverse. The obverse's image is not the same on the four types; one type displays only a draped, bare-headed bust of Sol, whereas a radiate bust of Sol together with two or four horses appears on the other three types. On the other hand, the reverses of all four types show similar elements: the legend AVRELIANVS AVG CONS together with a depiction of the emperor sacrificing at an altar, holding a *patera* and a scepter or a book. The legend AVRELIANVS AVG CONS can be explained in various ways. CONS can perhaps be understood as an abbreviation of *consul*. However, according to Watson, CONS might either refer to *consecravit* or *consecrator*, which alludes to the consecration of Aurelian's temple of Sol in Rome.²⁴⁷ Since *consul* is normally rendered as COS on coinage,²⁴⁸ the latter supposition is more plausible than the first one. CONS can also abbreviate *conservator*, but since *conservator* was never used before in combination with the name of an emperor and was nearly always connected with a deity, it seems unlikely that Aurelian, who is depicted while making a sacrifice, is referred to as *conservator* on these particular coin types. Consequently, Watson's hypothesis that CONS refers to *consecravit* or *consecrator* is the most convincing, especially when one considers the construction of the temple dedicated to Sol under Aurelian's reign.²⁴⁹

In view of his coins' prominent display of the sun god, we must explain why Aurelian selected Sol to be his tutelary deity. The ancient literary source attributes Aurelian's predilection for Sol to the sun god's support for Aurelian in the Palmyrene war (272–273).²⁵⁰

²⁴⁷ Watson, *Aurelian*, p. 191.

²⁴⁸ Ibid. To this argument, Watson adds the following: '(...) nor is the reverse iconography, especially where Aurelian appears in military dress, relevant to his role as consul. However, since *consul* forms a vast element of imperial titulature and is frequently present on imperial coins, the iconography on coinage is in many cases not geared to the imperial titulature in general and the title *consul* in particular.'

²⁴⁹ On the Sol temple: Eutropius 9.15.1; Aurelius Victor, *De Caesaribus* 35.7; H.A. Aurelianus 1.3, 25.6, 35.3, 39.2. See further Watson, *Aurelian*, pp. 191–193.

²⁵⁰ H.A. Aurelianus 25.4–6: *Recepto igitur orientis statu Emesam victor Aurelianus ingressus est ac statim ad Templum Heliogabali tetendit, quasi communi officio vota soluturus. Verum illic eam formam numinis repperit quam in bello sibi faventem vidit. Quare et illic templa fundavit donariis ingentibus positis et Romae Soli templum posuit maiore honorificentia consecratum, ut suo dicemus loco.* Translation (D. Magie): 'And so, having reduced the East to its former state, Aurelian entered Emesa as a conqueror, and at once made his way to the Temple of Elagabalus, to pay his vows as if by a duty common to all. But there he beheld that same divine form which he had seen supporting his cause in the battle.'

In which way, then, could the Sol coin types in general and the special Sol series in particular be interpreted? Do they signify an attempt to realize Sol's divine supremacy after the help that Sol offered to the emperor? In comparison to Sol coin types in general, these types do not communicate extraordinary messages; they fit perfectly into the previous third-century 'tradition' of referring to Sol on coins. The large quantity of coin types referring to Sol points, however, to Sol's privileged position during Aurelian's rule. The unique coin series with Sol figuring on the obverse exhibits the prominent position of Sol during Aurelian's reign, when the solar deity acquired the title of *Dominus Imperii Romani*. This epithet might refer to Sol's supervision of Aurelian's reunion of the Roman Empire by his victories in the East. They can then be associated with the coin types bearing both the legend RESTITVTOR ORBIS or RESTITVTOR ORIENTIS and an image of Sol.²⁵¹ Whether the link between Sol and *Dominus Imperii Romani* also underscores the religious unification of the Empire is doubtful.²⁵² The appearance of a deity's bust on the obverse was not new (e.g. Hercules on Postumus' coins); it shows that the emperor claimed a special connection with the particular god. Furthermore, we must consider that these exceptional Sol types were rare. Although the types have an exceptional character, I agree with Watson that they do not refer to any revolutionary reform that Aurelian may have brought into force to attain supremacy for Sol.²⁵³

When the unique coin types of Elagabalus are compared to Aurelian's Sol types, the differences between them are striking. Compared to Elagabalus' types, the majority of Aurelian's types correspond perfectly to third-century imperial coinage. Except for the special series minted at Serdica, neither legend nor imagery on Aurelian's types shows unique elements; whereas Elagabalus propagated his new 'religious status' as high priest as well as the magnificence of the Syrian deity Elagabal, Aurelian assumed no new religious role and introduced no new god. In addition,

Wherefore he not only established temples there, dedicating gifts of great value, but he also built a temple to the Sun at Rome, which he consecrated with still greater pomp, as we shall relate in the proper place.' On the Palmyrene war, see above, p. 16.

²⁵¹ RESTITVTOR ORBIS in combination with depiction of Sol: *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, no. 367. RESTITVTOR ORIENTIS in combination with a depiction of Sol: *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, nos. 374, 375. On the coins of Aurelian bearing the legend RESTITVTOR ORIENTIS and showing an image of Sol, see also above, pp. 128–129.

²⁵² See further B.M. di Dario, *Il Sole Invincibile. Aureliano riformatore politico e religioso* (Padua, 2002), p. 104 and J.F. White, *Restorer of the World: The Roman Emperor Aurelian* (Staplehurst, 2005), p. 132.

²⁵³ Watson, *Aurelian*, p. 191.

the Serdica coins which show unique elements can probably be explained by Aurelian's military reunification of the Empire and not by any religious reform.

Aurelian's coins point evidently to prominence and privilege for Sol during his reign. The literary sources provide additional information:

He enacted very many laws, and salutary ones indeed. He set the priest-hoods in order, he constructed the Temple of the Sun, and he founded its college of pontiffs; and he also allotted funds for making repairs and paying attendants.²⁵⁴

As the anonymous author of the *Historia Augusta* informs us, Aurelian constructed a new temple of the Sun at Rome and founded the *pontifices dei Solis*, a new priestly college.²⁵⁵ Furthermore, special games dedicated to Sol, the *agon Solis*, were inaugurated.²⁵⁶ The construction of a temple as well as the inauguration of games dedicated to a particular deity was not unprecedented and was wholly embedded in Roman tradition.²⁵⁷ On the other hand, the inclusion of a new priestly college devoted to one god in particular in the list of *sacerdotes*, as Rüpke's *fasti sacerdotum* suggests, from 274 onward is exceptional.²⁵⁸ This points again to the enormous importance Aurelian attributed to the sun god. Yet, the orthodoxy of the new college's name within Roman tradition and the priesthood's coexistence with the other pontifical college listed for this period, the *pontifices Vestae*, demonstrate that the college of *pontifices dei Solis*, and thus the worship of Sol, conformed to traditional state religion.²⁵⁹ However, although Watson dates the replacement of the *pontifices maiores* by the *pontifices Vestae* to the mid-fourth century, the college of the *pontifices* had already been removed from the *fasti sacerdotum* from 274 onward. The institution of the *pontifices dei Solis* in the same year can perhaps be linked to this removal.²⁶⁰ If the latter is true, then Aurelian's preference for

²⁵⁴ H.A. Aurelianus 35.3: *Leges plurimas sanxit, et quidem salutare. Sacerdotia composuit, Templum Solis fundavit et pontifices roboravit; decrevit etiam emolumenta sartis tectis et ministris*. See also Schuol, "Die paganen religionen", p. 932.

²⁵⁵ More on the temple: Eutropius 9.15.1; Aurelius Victor, *De Caesaribus* 35.7; H.A. Aurelianus 1.3, 25.6, 39.2; Zosimus, 1.61.2. See further Watson, *Aurelian*, pp. 191–193; White, *Restorer of the World*, pp. 133–134; *LTUR* 4, pp. 331–333.

²⁵⁶ See Watson, *Aurelian*, p. 192; White, *Restorer of the World*, p. 133.

²⁵⁷ On games dedicated to Apollo and Cybele, see for instance M. Clavel-Lévêque, *L'Empire en jeux. Espace symbolique et pratique sociale dans le monde romain* (Paris, 1984), pp. 94–7.

²⁵⁸ Rüpke, *Fasti sacerdotum* 1, pp. 480 ff.

²⁵⁹ Watson, *Aurelian*, pp. 192–193.

²⁶⁰ Rüpke, *Fasti sacerdotum* 1, p. 480.

Sol might have involved some major religious changes. However, further evidence is lacking.

Despite all differences, Elagabalus and Aurelian both revealed their predilection for a particular (solar) deity. Whereas Elagabalus was unanimously reviled because of it, Aurelian came off well because he kept to the beaten track. Naturally, the rejection of Elagabalus can be explained by the fanatical zeal with which Elagabalus operated openly as priest-emperor. Yet, the fact that Elagabalus and Aurelian connected themselves and their reigns explicitly with particular deities might adhere to a practice already inaugurated by Commodus' self-association with Hercules.²⁶¹ In this way, emperors' individual decisions to propagate an imperial connection with a specific deity would have followed a tradition. The prominence of Jupiter and Hercules in Tetrarchic ideology, then, cannot be considered wholly novel.

²⁶¹ These emperors' attempts to connect themselves with particular deities can be considered part of the process of sacralization, see pp. 143–145.

CHAPTER FOUR

IMPERIAL *EXEMPLA*

Military prowess, or *virtus*, is but one quality that characterized an effective emperor. Ideally, a 'good' emperor was not just a competent general but also displayed other virtues. These imperial *virtutes* were propagated throughout the Roman Empire by means of imperial panegyric, decrees, inscriptions, biographies, and coins.¹ On coinage in particular, juxtapositions of AVG or AVGG with the virtue and/or the imperial portrait on the obverse would connect the virtues mentioned on the reverses directly with the emperor(s). Not all emperors emphasized the same virtues on their coinage. For example, Elagabalus seems not to have felt the need to stress *virtus*, whereas his successor Severus Alexander did try to convince the Roman people of his military prowess by propagating it on his coins. The presence or absence of particular virtues on coins issued by different emperors brings us to the question as to whether an imperial canon of virtues existed. But before elaborating on this, the concept 'virtue' must be clarified.²

Modern scholars investigating imperial virtues on coinage consider virtues to be personifications with divine power – in other words, deified abstractions or, as Fears puts it, 'specific impersonal *numina*'.³ For many, the terms 'personification' and 'virtue' are interchangeable.⁴ Indeed, virtues can be considered personifications. Yet, not all personifications are

¹ Noreña, "The communication of the emperor's virtues", p. 153.

² 'But if one is to compare coins with other sources, particularly philosophically inspired ones (i.e. in talking of the virtues of the ideal statesman) it is vital to distinguish what is a virtue and what is not', A. Wallace-Hadrill, "The emperor and his virtues", *Historia* 30 (1981), pp. 298–323; p. 309.

³ J.R. Fears, "The cult of virtues and Roman imperial ideology", p. 839. Personifications received cultic honours and are therefore deities. They can be considered 'impersonal narrowly prescribed functional godheads' whereas the Olympians are 'personalized multifaceted gods' (Fears, "The cult of virtues and Roman imperial ideology", p. 840; see also above, p. 97). However, *Liberalitas* was the only virtue that was never the object of a state cult (Noreña, "The communication of the emperor's virtues", p. 161).

⁴ See for instance H. Mattingly, "The Roman 'virtues'", *HTR* 30 (1937), pp. 103–117; Fears, "The cult of virtues and Roman imperial ideology"; Wallace-Hadrill, "The emperor and his virtues"; C.J. Classen, "Virtutes Imperatoriae", *Arctos* 25 (1991), pp. 17–39.

virtues.⁵ I therefore follow Noreña in separating ‘moral qualities inherent in men’ (i.e. virtues) from other personifications.⁶ Yet, even after labeling virtues as moral qualities inherent in men, the division between virtues and other personifications stays somewhat vague. The classification could perhaps be clarified by explaining the link between the two types of personifications. The emperor’s personal qualities benefited the Roman Empire materially and immaterially. ‘Personal qualities’, then, are synonymous with virtues, while other personifications imply ‘material and immaterial benefits’.⁷ Virtues were thus the source of benefits; because of the emperor’s *liberalitas* the Roman people received gifts in cash or kind (*moneta* or *annona*) from time to time and because of his *providentia* a fortunate age (*saeculum feliciter*) could dawn.

The personifications on imperial coinage that Noreña defines as virtues are Aequitas, Clementia, Indulgentia, Iustitia, Liberalitas, Munificentia, Patientia, Pietas, Providentia, Pudicitia, and Virtus.⁸ The representational category ‘virtues’ is based on Noreña’s list of virtues, which means that coin types propagating one of these 11 virtues are considered to be within this particular representational category. Coins representing material and immaterial benefits are distributed over several representational categories. Various immaterial benefits, summarized by the term *saeculum aureum*, will be discussed in the following chapter.

⁵ I follow Noreña in his definition of personification; he describes personifications as ‘human figures that gave visual shape and concrete embodiment to a wide range of abstract ideas’, see Noreña, “The communication of the emperor’s virtues”, p. 153. See above, p. 97.

⁶ Noreña, “The communication of the emperor’s virtues”, p. 153. *Virtus est animi habitus*: Cicero, *De inventione rhetorica* 2.53.

⁷ According to Fears the cultic significance of the worship of virtues at Rome was based on ‘power’ and ‘benefits.’ He takes Concordia (no virtue, however, in my view since it is not a moral quality inherent in men) as an example: ‘Concordia is a *numen*, a specific divine power defined by the production of a specific divine benefit: the establishment of a state of harmonious cooperation among fellow citizens’ (Fears, “The cult of virtues and Roman imperial ideology”, p. 833). He bases this point on Cicero, *De natura deorum* 2.62 (‘Those gods therefore who were the authors of various benefits which they bestowed, and indeed the names that I just now enumerated express the various powers of the gods that bear them’: *Utilitatum igitur magnitudine constituti sunt ei di qui utilitates quasque gignebant, atque his quidem nominibus quae paulo ante dicta sunt quae vis sit in quoque declaratur deo*).

⁸ Noreña, “The communication of the emperor’s virtues”, p. 155. The same eleven virtues (with the exception of Constantia) were also listed by Wallace-Hadrill (“The emperor and his virtues”, p. 310 with n. 56).

Imperial virtues offered some of the more explicit messages for representing power in general and legitimizing the emperor's position in particular. Coins presenting imperial virtues, which thus emphasized the emperor's 'benevolence and care for the ruled', communicated that the emperor was the right man in the right place.⁹ They represented him as having qualities which his subjects considered an essential qualification for being head of the Roman state.¹⁰

Charlesworth proclaimed the existence of a canon of imperial virtues in the imperial period which, in his view, was based on the golden shield of Augustus (which propagated *virtus, clementia, iustitia, pietas*).¹¹ Yet such a canon is not visible on imperial coinage, and in addition, in a study from 1991, Classen demonstrated that the constellation of four virtues as they appeared on Augustus' *clupeus* did not resurface in imperial literature or on archaeological monuments.¹² Thus, Augustus' golden shield did not fix the imperial ideal, nor did a canon of virtues emerge in another way during the Empire. It seems, instead, that the choice to emphasize particular imperial virtues, either on coins or in literature or on archaeological monuments, was determined by temporally specific reasons or circumstances.¹³ Still, the plausibility that such specific motivations and not an established canon of imperial virtues generated the particular virtues' propagation under particular emperors allows that 'fluctuations in emphasis on the different imperial virtues ... reflect changing conceptions of what the ideal emperor was'.¹⁴ Thus, despite, or perhaps because of, the absence of a lasting canon of imperial virtues, the absence or presence of particular imperial virtues during a specific emperor's reign illuminates the image of the ideal emperor in his time.

⁹ 'Benevolence and care for the ruled': M.P. Charlesworth, "The virtues of a Roman emperor: propaganda and the creation of belief", *PBA* 23 (1937), pp. 105–133; p. 111.

¹⁰ Wallace-Hadrill, "The Emperor and his virtues", p. 317.

¹¹ In 27 the senate presented Augustus with a golden shield on account of his courage, clemency, justice and piety, see *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* 34: ...*clupeusque aureus in curia Iulia positus, quem mihi senatum populumque Romanum dare virtutis clementiae iustitiae pietatis caussa testatum est per eius clupeus inscriptionem*.

¹² A canon of imperial virtues was suggested by Charlesworth in "The virtues of a Roman emperor". See further Wallace-Hadrill, "The emperor and his virtues"; Noreña, "The communication of the emperor's virtues"; Classen, "Virtutes imperatoriae". Consensus seems to have been reached as to the absence of a canon of imperial virtues: Noreña, "The communication of the emperor's virtues", p. 157.

¹³ Classen, "Virtutes imperatoriae", pp. 38–39.

¹⁴ Noreña, "The communication of the emperor's virtues", p. 153.

Before discussing particular virtues on third-century imperial coinage, the broad outline of third-century emperors' emphasis on virtues through coins must be sketched.¹⁵

1. THE GENERAL PICTURE

Figure 25 shows the percentages of coin types stemming from the representational category 'virtues', which is based on Noreña's classification, spread over third-century emperors' reigns.¹⁶

The percentages of coin types representing a virtue theme displayed per emperor demonstrate how much each individual Augustus proclaimed his virtues in general on coinage throughout the third century. Two comments on this graph must precede its interpretation. First, virtues are not specified in this graph. An overview of the most frequent *virtutes* on third-century coins will be offered in figure 26. Second, on a minority of coin types propagating virtues, the featured virtue is not associated with the emperor by means of the juxtaposition AVG or AVGG, so that the virtue is either rendered on its own (i.e. without an addition), or else another word follows instead of AVG or AVGG. VIRTVS EXERCITVS and PIETAS MILITVM are examples of the latter. Nevertheless, these virtues still reflected on the emperor himself through the presence of his portrait on the coins' obverse and/or because the ruler represented the most virtuous *exemplum* for his subjects.¹⁷

As we can see in figure 25, virtues appeared frequently on coins in the third century. Only on coin types of the short-lived emperors Didius Julianus, Diadumenian, and Saloninus did virtues not appear.¹⁸ Meanwhile, the mean percentage of coin types propagating virtues per reign

¹⁵ According to Fears, 'only a detailed reign-by-reign analysis examining the virtues as a composite and individually within the overall imagery of each reign can fully elucidate the role of virtues in imperial ideology in the long period between Trajan and Constantine' (Fears, "The cult of virtues and Roman imperial ideology", p. 909). As we shall see in this chapter, however, a separate analysis of the imperial virtues can clarify the role of virtues in imperial ideology.

¹⁶ For the relative frequency on *denarii* of imperial virtues as a group (expressed as a percentage of all personification types by reign) for the period 69–235, see Noreña, "The communication of the emperor's virtues", p. 155, figure 1.

¹⁷ Some famous examples of the emperor as *exemplum*: Pliny, *Panegyricus* 45.6; Velleius Paterculus 2.126.5; Cass. Dio 52.19–39.

¹⁸ Especially for Diadumenian and Saloninus, who issued respectively one and two coin types, the small number of coin types from their reigns explains the lack of types showing a virtue-related theme.

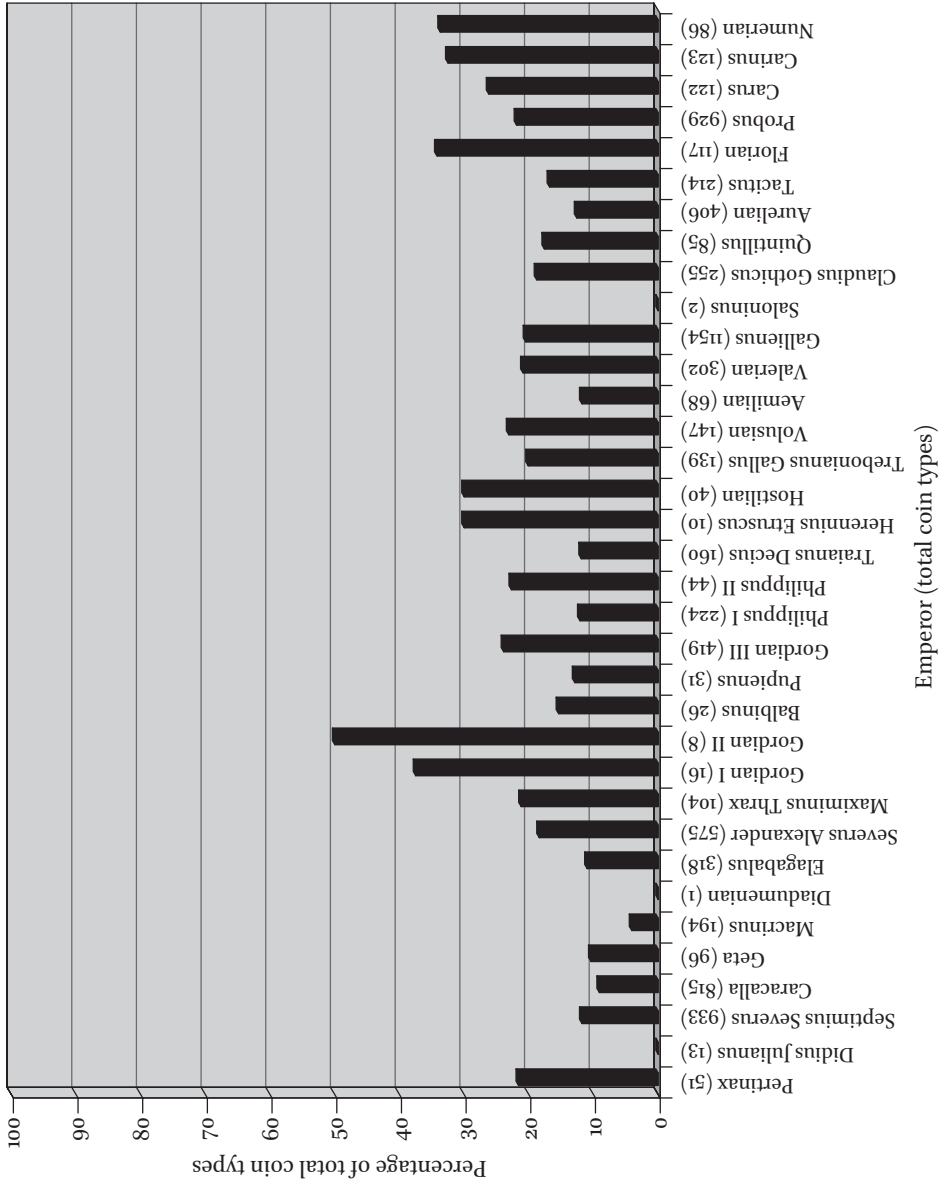


Figure 25 Proportions of coin types propagating 'virtues' per emperor

is 19%. This high mean demonstrates that virtues played an important role in the representation of imperial power during the third century. The prominence of imperial virtues on third-century imperial coinage might reflect the precarious political situation in this period.¹⁹ This hypothesis is supported by the increase and greater steadiness of the percentages in the second half of the third century (more specifically from Herennius Etruscus onward), the period in which the problems in the Roman Empire increased, compared to the first half.²⁰ Perhaps the specification of the virtues (figure 26), showing the particular virtues which were emphasized during the third-century reigns, can confirm this presumed parallelism between the propagation of virtues and the spirit of the time.

As figure 25 demonstrates, some peaks (percentages exceeding 30%) and low points (percentages below 10%) emerge. More than 30% of coin types minted under Gordian I and II, Florian, Carinus, and Numerian (in the case of Gordian II even 50%) propagate the emperor's virtues, whereas fewer than 10% of the coin types issued during the rules of Caracalla and Macrinus represent them.²¹

Although a canon of imperial virtues, as stated above, cannot be detected for the imperial period, five *virtutes* were prominently displayed on imperial coin types minted in the third century.²² *Providentia*, *liberalitas*, *virtus*, *pietas*, and *aequitas* were often associated with the emperor in the period 193–284 A.D. The other virtues, *indulgentia*, *iustitia*, *pudicitia*, *munificentia*, *patientia* and *clementia*, were less frequently emphasized

¹⁹ Fears argues that the prominence of virtues in Claudius' propaganda of the first year of his reign reflected the critical political situation (Fears, "The cult of virtues and Roman imperial ideology", p. 894).

²⁰ Pertinax: 21.6%; Didius Julianus: 0%; Septimius Severus: 11.8%; Caracalla: 9.1%; Geta: 10.4%; Macrinus: 4.1%; Diadumenian: 0%; Elagabalus: 11%; Severus Alexander: 18.4%; Maximinus Thrax: 21.2%; Gordian I: 37.5%; Gordian II: 50%; Balbinus: 15.4%; Pupienus: 12.9%; Gordian III: 23.9%; Philippus I: 12.1%; Philippus II: 22.7%; Decius: 11.9%; Herennius Etruscus: 30%; Hostilian: 30%; Trebonianus Gallus: 20.1%; Volusian: 23.1%; Aemilian: 11.8%; Valerian: 20.9%; Gallienus: 20.5%; Saloninus: 0%; Claudius Gothicus: 18.8%; Quintillus: 17.6%; Aurelian: 12.6%; Tacitus: 16.8%; Florian: 34.2%; Probus: 21.9%; Carus: 26.2%; Carinus: 32.5%; Numerian: 33.7%.

²¹ Gordian I: 37.5%; Gordian II: 50%; Florian: 34.2%; Carinus: 32.5%; Numerian: 33.7%. However, because of the small number of coin types minted during the reigns of both Gordiani, the high percentages representing the emphasis laid on virtues by them distort the picture somewhat. Caracalla: 9.1%; Macrinus: 4.1%.

²² *Aequitas*, *pietas*, *virtus*, *providentia*, *liberalitas* and *pudicitia* were prominently displayed on coin types issued in the period 69–235, see Noreña, "The communication of the emperor's virtues", p. 156.

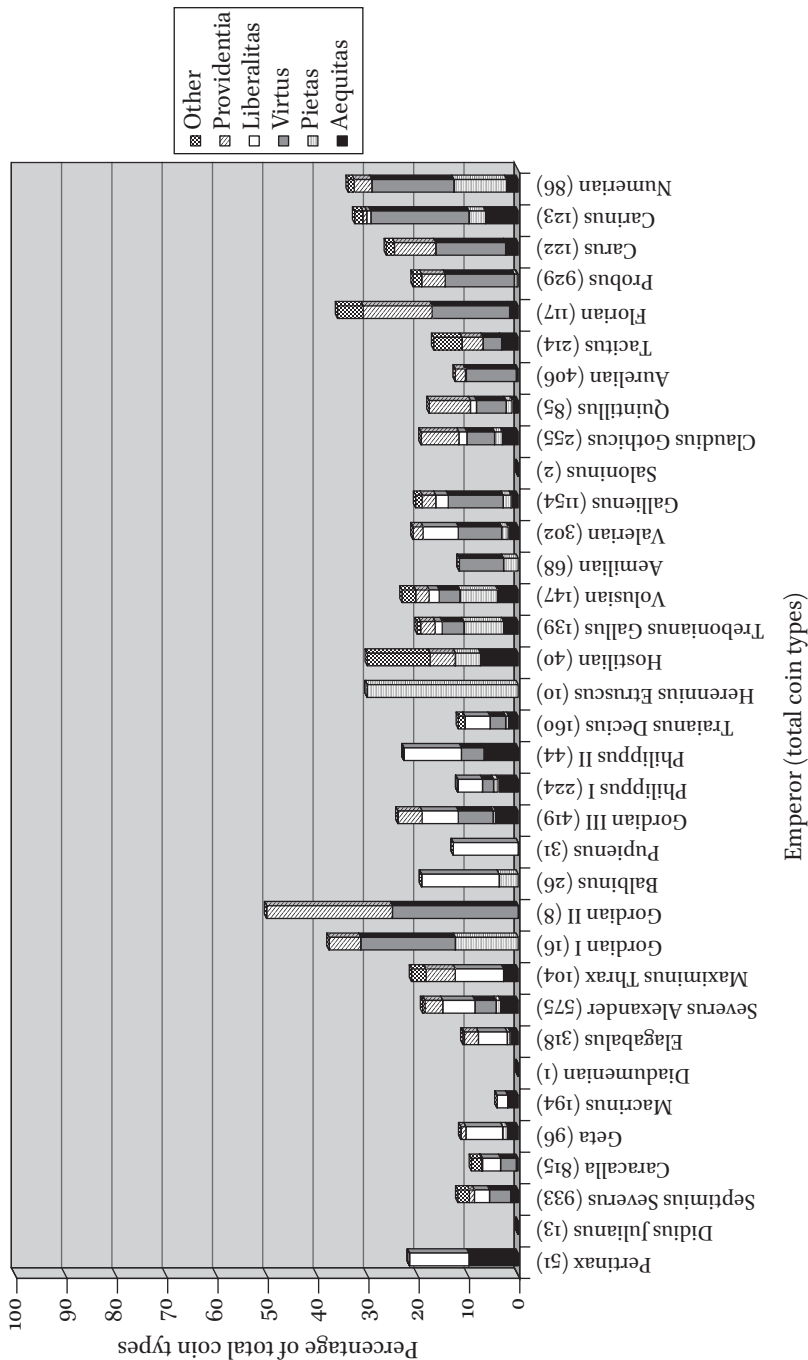


Figure 26 Proportions of coin types propagating specific virtues per emperor

(see ‘other’ in figure 26).²³ The virtues appearing the most frequently on imperial third-century coinage are interpreted in the following sections.

Conspicuously, the same five virtues were also prominent in earlier times; Noreña has demonstrated that *providentia*, *liberalitas*, *virtus*, *pietas*, and *aequitas* appeared frequently on coins during the time span 69–235 whereas *indulgentia*, *iustitia*, *pudicitia*, *munificentia*, *patientia* and *clementia* were not/hardly publicized on imperial coins from this period. It seems, therefore, that for a long period within Roman imperial history the first five *virtutes* were considered the most important qualities for a ruler to possess.

2. PROVIDENTIA

As stated above, *providentia* is one of the core virtues on third-century imperial coinage (image 12). Concerning the meaning of *providentia*, a distinction between *providentia Augusti* and *providentia deorum* must be made.²⁴ *Providentia Augusti* implies the foresight and care of the emperor toward Rome and the Romans, whereas *providentia deorum* signifies divine foresight.²⁵ Because *providentia deorum* reflects a divine quality

²³ *Indulgentia*: Septimius Severus (*RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 80, 193, 266–268, 759–760, 763, 763A, 766, 766A), Caracalla (*RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 130a)–132, 214, 300, 415a)–415d), 418A, 471), Severus Alexander (*RIC* IV.2, Severus Alexander, no. 557), Maximinus Thrax (*RIC* IV.2, Maximinus Thrax, nos. 8, 46, 47), Gallienus (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 46, 106, 203–206, 368, 418, 419, 485, 546, 547), Florian (*RIC* V.1, Florianus, nos. 65–67), Probus (*RIC* V.2, Probus, no. 314), Carus (*RIC* V.2, Carus, no. 130). *Iustitia*: Septimius Severus (*RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, no. 505), Caracalla (*RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 331A, 335, 355A) Severus Alexander (*RIC* IV.2, Severus Alexander, nos. 507, 563). *Clementia*: Gallienus (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 100, 170), Tacitus (*RIC* V.1, Tacitus, nos. 83–85, 126–128, 190, 206, 210, 211, 213, 214), Florian (*RIC* V.1, Florianus, nos. 26–28), Probus (*RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 306, 641–648, 838–843, 905, 920–924, 927, 928), Carus (*RIC* V.2, Carus, no. 118), Carinus (*RIC* V.2, Carinus, nos. 323, 324), Numerian (*RIC* V.2, Numerianus, no. 463). *Pudicitia*: Septimius Severus (*RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, no. 524), Decius (*RIC* IV.3, Trajan Decius, nos. 46a, 46b)), Hostilian (*RIC* IV.3, Hostilianus, nos. 203a)–203e)), Trebonianus Gallus (*RIC* IV.3, Trebonianus Gallus, no. 88), Volusian (*RIC* IV.3, Volusianus, nos. 204, 232–233b)), Gallienus (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 272). *Munificentia*: Septimius Severus (*RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 82, 100, 721, 737), Elagabalus (*RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, no. 365). Hostilian was the only third-century emperor who broadcast ‘other virtues’ more often than the ‘core virtues’ on his coinage.

²⁴ For the use of *providentia Augusti* and *providentia deorum* in the third century against the background of imperial history, see J.-P. Martin, *Providentia deorum. Recherches sur certains aspects religieux du pouvoir impérial romain* (Rome, 1982), pp. 367–420. However, Martin does not disconnect *providentia Augusti* and *providentia deorum*.

²⁵ See further still M.P. Charlesworth, “Providentia and Aeternitas”, *HTR* 29 (1936), pp. 107–132.



Image 12 *Providentia* (RIC IV.2, Gordianus II, no. 1)

and not a moral quality of the emperor, I chose to place coin types showing the legend *PROVIDENTIA DEORVM* in the representational category ‘divine association’.²⁶ During the course of the imperial period, however, the word *providentia* became more and more associated with the emperor.²⁷ In his article on *providentia* and *aeternitas*, Charlesworth offers a more detailed description of *providentia Augusti* or, in other words, the emperor’s foresight:

(...) we can roughly define the task of his foresight as being ‘to care for the life of the state’, and so it manifests itself chiefly in three ways, by caring for the welfare of the people, by providing for a stable succession, and by warding off conspiracies.²⁸

Providentia deorum also materialized frequently on coins when imperial succession was in question; this slogan communicated that the successor was chosen by the gods.²⁹ Because the emperor as well as the gods were responsible for providing a stable imperial succession (see quotation), it turns out that both forms of *providentia* could work together.

Imperial *providentia* was thus an all-embracing virtue; it implied the emperor’s care for his subjects on the one hand and the *aeternitas* of the Empire on the other hand. It is therefore striking that the imperial

²⁶ See above, p. 43.

²⁷ Charlesworth, “Providentia and Aeternitas”, p. 121. According to R.-Alföldi, with the deification of the ruler divine properties were transferred to the living emperor, see M.R.-Alföldi, “Providentia Augusti. To the question of limes fortifications in the 4th century”, *AAntHung* 3 (1955–1956), pp. 245–260; p. 253.

²⁸ Charlesworth, “Providentia and Aeternitas”, p. 110.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 121. On the close association between *providentia* and dynastic succession in the first century A.D., see R.T. Scott, “Providentia Aug.”, *Historia* 31.4 (1982), pp. 436–459. On Commodus, see Martin, *Providentia deorum*, pp. 339–340 with nn. 235–249.

virtue *providentia* was emphasized most strongly in the second half of the third century, from Hostilian's reign onwards – in the period of strongest crisis.³⁰ Apparently, the emperors reigning in the second half of the third century tried to bind their subjects to the center of power by persuading them of their foresight; the ruler's *providentia* guaranteed the existence of the Empire and, indirectly, the welfare of Roman subjects amid imperial turmoil.³¹

In contrast to the propagation of *providentia* in the second half of the third century, *providentia* was only incidentally publicized on the imperial coinage of the first half of the third century. Only Elagabalus, Severus Alexander, Maximinus Thrax, and Gordian I, II and III paid considerable attention to *providentia* on their coins.³²

As to the propagation of imperial *providentia* through coinage, coin types bearing the legend PROVIDENTIA (AVG/AVGG) accompanied with a depiction of Providentia holding her attributes (e.g. *cornucopiae*, baton, globe) were most common in the third century. Sometimes standard imperial titulature replaces the legend.³³ Some types deviate also from this standard. On the coin types of Septimius Severus, Caracalla, Gallienus, and Aurelian bearing the legend PROVIDENTIA (AVG), Providentia gives way to images of Medusa, Mercury, or Venus.³⁴ The legend PROVIDENTIA

³⁰ *RIC* IV.3, Hostilianus, nos. 221a), 222b); *RIC* IV.3, Trebonianus Gallus, nos. 23, 43, 44, 74; *RIC* IV.3, Volusianus, nos. 193, 201–203; *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, nos. 15, 49, 112, 113, 247, 248; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 89, 90, 158–163, 188, 276, 395, 461; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 65, 116, 266–271, 371, 508–510, 580, 619, 653; *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 85–96, 122, 161–164, 187, 240; *RIC* V.1, Quintillus, nos. 27–29, 42, 71–73; *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, nos. 36, 37, 68, 69, 207, 286, 335, 336; *RIC* V.1, Tacitus, nos. 1, 46, 47, 92, 98, 101, 102, 120, 152; *RIC* V.1, Florianus, nos. 10, 21, 35–39, 82–89, 104; *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 46–48, 97, 180, 181, 252, 319, 395–399, 466, 467, 487–496, 550–554, 716–729; *RIC* V.2, Carus, nos. 15, 32, 41–43, 53, 55, 62, 105, 119; *RIC* V.2, Carinus, no. 303; *RIC* V.2, Numerianus, nos. 446–448.

³¹ 'These are the things for which the weary citizens were hoping and praying, for lasting peace and for a change for the better to be brought about by the *providentia* of their rulers, who care for their subjects' (Charlesworth, 'Providentia and Aeternitas', p. 120).

³² *RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, nos. 22, 23, 31, 42, 43, 321, 322, 332, 333; *RIC* IV.2, Severus Alexander, nos. 173, 174, 249–252, 296, 397, 404–406, 414–416, 642–647; *RIC* IV.2, Maximinus Thrax, nos. 13, 20, 61–63, 84; *RIC* IV.2, Gordianus I, no. 9; *RIC* IV.2, Gordianus II, nos. 1, 4; *RIC* IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 4, 10, 18, 23, 148–150, 163, 172, 193–199b), 257a), 257b), 334. The attention Septimius Severus, Caracalla and Geta paid to *providentia* is negligible (*RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 92a), 92b), 139, 166, 284–286, 491a), 491b); *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 164, 165; *RIC* IV.1, Geta, possibly no. 81).

³³ A coin type of Gallienus shows an image of Providentia with only S C in the legend (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 276).

³⁴ Medusa: *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 285 and 286; *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 164 and 165. Mercury: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 653; *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, no. 336. Venus: *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, no. 335. For Medusa on *providentia* types, see Martin, *Providentia*

(AVG) in combination with a depiction of prominent Olympian deities such as Venus and Mercury confirms the close association between the emperor's foresight and *providentia deorum*. On a coin type of Probus *providentia* is directly linked to the person of the emperor by the legend PROV PROBI AVG NOSTRI.³⁵ Finally, Florian issued *providentia* types bearing the legend PERPETVITATE AVG which shows the link between the emperor's foresight and the *aeternitas* of the Empire.³⁶

3. LIBERALITAS

In comparison with the connotations of *providentia*, *liberalitas* is less comprehensive. It reflects an act of generosity by highly placed persons toward an individual or group lower in hierarchy by status or by circumstance.³⁷ *Liberalitas* could manifest itself through, for instance, distributions of money (*congiaria*, *donativa*, and *alimenta*), reduction or cancellation of taxes or tax arrears, *frumentatio*, the provision of games and spectacles, and building projects.³⁸ *Liberalitas* was only officially considered an imperial virtue from the second century A.D. onward; *liberalitas* types were struck for the first time under Hadrian.³⁹ Next to security, justice and an exercise of power that was based on Roman values, *liberalitates* were part of subjects' expectations of their leader.⁴⁰

Although *liberalitas* became a 'fixture on the coinage' from Hadrian's reign onward, *liberalitas* did not appear on the coinage of every emperor after 235 (*image 13*).⁴¹ Figure 26 confirms this showing that *providentia* occurred on an opposite trajectory to *liberalitas* on third-century imperial

Deorum, 395–398. According to R.-Alföldi, the *Providentia* types from the middle of the third century appeal only to the soldiers. She illustrates this with the *Providentia* types of Gallienus on which Mercury appears with a money-bag in his raised hand, see R.-Alföldi, "Providentia Augusti", p. 253.

³⁵ *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 728 and 729.

³⁶ *RIC* V.1, Florianus, nos. 21 and 35.

³⁷ E. Manning, "Liberalitas – the decline and rehabilitation of a virtue", *G&R* 32.1 (1985), pp. 73–83; p. 78. Cicero and Seneca advise to give only to people who are deemed truly worth of it (Cicero, *De Officiis* 2.15.54 and Seneca, *Vita Beata* 23–24).

³⁸ H. Kloft, *Liberalitas principis. Herkunft und Bedeutung. Studien zur Prinzipatsideologie* (Cologne and Vienna, 1970), p. 99; Noreña, "The communication of the emperor's virtues", p. 160.

³⁹ See for instance *RIC* II, Hadrian, nos. 129, 130, 131.

⁴⁰ J. Sünskes Thompson, *Demonstrative Legitimation der Kaiserherrschaft im Epochenvergleich: zur politischen Macht des stadtrömischen Volkes* (Stuttgart, 2003), p. 67.

⁴¹ Pace Noreña, "The communication of the emperor's virtues", p. 161.



Image 13 *Liberalitas* (RIC V.1, Claudius Gothicus, no. 57)

coinage. Whereas imperial coinage emphasized *providentia* only incidentally during the first half of the third century, *liberalitas* was prominent on coins from the first half of the third century.⁴² After the reign of Decius, coin types displaying imperial generosity decreased in numbers (with the exception of Valerian's coins).⁴³ From Quintillus' reign onward, they nearly disappeared.⁴⁴ *Providentia*, on the other hand, appears more frequently on coin types issued in the second half of the third century, as stated above.

⁴² RIC IV.1, Pertinax, nos. 5, 18, 19, 25A, 26, 34; RIC IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 18, 27, 81a), 81b), 182, 263, 275–279, 398–403A, 442, 455a), 455b), 481, 482, 653, 654, 662, 767; RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 128, 134a)–136b), 158–160, 215a)–220, 302–305, 416, 430A, 509–510b), 519A, 527; RIC IV.1, Geta, nos. 87–89, 185a), 185b), 190a), 190b); RIC IV.2, Macrinus, nos. 78, 79, 193, 194; RIC IV.2, Elagabalus, nos. 9, 10, 97–104, 287, 288, 290, 291, 352–354A; RIC IV.2, Severus Alexander, nos. 147–154, 204–206, 242, 243, 281–283, 454, 455, 533, 534, 564–580; RIC IV.2, Maximinus Thrax, nos. 9, 10, 48–54, 111; RIC IV.2, Balbinus, nos. 3, 14–15A; RIC IV.2, Pupienus, nos. 3, 13, 14, 25; RIC IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 36, 42, 45, 53, 58, 66, 67, 137, 186–187b), 269(a)–270(b), 275, 275A, 279(a), 279(b), 283(a), 283(b), 289–290c), 316a)–317b); RIC IV.3, Philippus I, nos. 37A–38b), 177–183; RIC IV.3, Philippus II, nos. 230, 245, 266–267b); RIC IV.3, Trajan Decius, nos. 19, 106, 120a)–123. Only during the reigns of Didius Julianus, Diadumenian, and the two Gordiani were coin types promoting imperial *liberalitas* not issued. For Diadumenian, the single coin type issued during his short reign must be responsible for this. Concerning Didius Julianus and the two Gordiani, the explanation lies either likewise in the small number of coin types minted during their reigns or in the absence of *congiaria* taking place during their rules or, in different imperial preferences with regard to representation. It is worth noting, however, that the forebears of Didius Julianus and Diadumenian all stressed *liberalitas* on their coins (see Noreña, “The communication of the emperor's virtues”, p. 163).

⁴³ RIC IV.3, Trebonianus Gallus, nos. 36, 113; RIC IV.3, Volusianus, nos. 178, 254a), 254b); RIC V.1, Valerianus, nos. 42–45, 98–105, 164–168, 185, 196, 197, 243; RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 82–84, 147–151, 220–224, 420, 431, 443, 444, 255, 270–272, 385–386; RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 55, 111, 227, 228, 369, 387; RIC V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 57–59, 183.

⁴⁴ RIC V.1, Quintillus, no. 23; RIC V.1, Aurelianus, no. 229; RIC V.2, Carinus, no. 309.

The propagation of *liberalitas* until 235 might stem from the practice of imperial *congiaria*. *Liberalitas*, after all, was mainly associated on imperial coinage with distributions of money to the *plebs urbana* (*congiaria*). This becomes clear because beginning under Hadrian, the broader concept LIBERALITAS AVG began to replace the more specific CONGIARIVM.⁴⁵ Furthermore, *liberalitas* coin types often display a serial number that corresponded to the actual number of *congiaria*, which demonstrates that the *liberalitas* of the emperor and imperial *congiaria* were intimately connected.⁴⁶ Specifically for the period 69–235, Noreña has demonstrated, by comparing the number of coin types propagating *liberalitas* to the number of actual *congiaria* that took place in this period, that the frequency of *liberalitas* on coin types corresponded to the actual rate of *congiaria*.⁴⁷

If this correlation between *liberalitas* types and *congiaria* would have existed throughout the whole third century, the (near-)disappearance of *liberalitas* types after Decius would imply the absence, or at least a decline,⁴⁸ of *congiaria* during this period. However, policy and publicity do not necessarily have to coincide, and when the emperors had indeed put a stop to the traditional distributions of money, the people's support for the emperor would have diminished; as Kloft argues, 'fehlende Freigebigkeit' fits in the picture of a *malus princeps*.⁴⁹ However, according to Stylow, pressing necessities forced the emperors in this period to give priority to a good relationship with the military, which went at the expense of emperors' striving for the people's loyalty. Consequently, *largitiones* to the military gradually drove out *liberalitates*.⁵⁰ A passage in the *Historia Augusta's Vita Probi* illustrates the latter:

He, truly conscious of his powers, stood in fear of neither barbarian nor pretender. What great bliss would then have shone forth, if under his rule there had ceased to be soldiers! No rations would now be furnished by any provincial, no pay for the troops taken out of the public largesses, the

⁴⁵ Noreña, "The communication of the emperor's virtues", p. 163. In the third century, the term CONGIARIVM does not longer appear on any surviving imperial coinage.

⁴⁶ Noreña, "The communication of the emperor's virtues", p. 163.

⁴⁷ Ibid., pp. 162–4.

⁴⁸ The literary sources report that, in any case, Aurelian distributed *congiaria*, see H.A. Aurelianus 48.5: *sciendum tamen congiaria illum ter dedisse*... It seems that the emperor Aurelian also enlarged the sum of money that was normally distributed at a *congiarium*, see Kloft, *Liberalitas principis*, p. 95 with n. 50.

⁴⁹ Kloft, *Liberalitas principis*, p. 157.

⁵⁰ Stylow, *Libertas und Liberalitas*, p. 74.

commonwealth of Rome would keep its treasures forever, no tax required of the holder of land; it was in very truth a golden age that he promised.⁵¹

In this case, policy and publicity thus seem to have coincided. In addition, another factor, namely the emperors' increasing absence from the capital after 250, might have contributed to the decline of *liberalitas* types in the second half of the third century. Because of this absence, the emperors could not remain personally involved in the *congiaria*, which might had affected the propagation of this imperial virtue.

The majority of third-century coin types promoting *liberalitas* bear the legend LIBERALITAS AVG/AVGG and depicts either Liberalitas and her attributes (*abacus*, *cornucopiae*, *tessera*) or the emperor seated on a platform distributing money to citizens in her presence.⁵² If the latter *liberalitas* scenes on coinage accurately portray the ceremony of a *congiarium*, the people received their money from the emperor himself without the intervention of officials.⁵³ This must have resulted in certain part of the Roman population gaining greater awareness of the emperor's power. Sometimes a prefect, an officer, or one or more soldiers stand next to the emperor, while soldiers' presence on the platform tinges the *liberalitas* message with a military character. Probably these types tried to broadcast that the emperor's generosity extended to the army, in the form of *donativa*. This, however, is not certain; the soldiers might also reflect the emperor's dependence on the army for his safety. Another, more practical explanation for the soldiers' appearance on these types is that the coins recognize the military's help in actually distributing the money. Sometimes the *liberalitas* coins imply dynastic messages as well. Coin types of Septimius Severus, Caracalla, Geta, Macrinus, Pupienus, Philippus I and II, Decius, Valerian, and Gallienus show the emperor together with his son/father/brother distributing *monetae* to subjects. In this way, a *liberalitas*

⁵¹ H.A. Probus 23.2f: *ille vero conscius sui non barbaros timuit, non tyrannos. Quae deinde felicitas emicuisset, si sub illo principe milites non fuissent? Annonam provincialis daret nullus, stipendia de largitionibus nulla erogarentur, aeternos thesauros haberet Romana res publica, nihil expenderetur a principe, nihil a possessore redderetur; aureum profecto saeculum promittebat.*

⁵² Septimius Severus' and Caracalla's mints struck unique types with the legend FELICITAS SAECVLI depicting the emperor and his family together with Liberalitas (*RIC* IV.I, Septimius Severus, no. 263; *RIC* IV.I, Caracalla, no. 128). See also below, p. 197. From the reign of Gallienus onward, money distribution scenes disappeared from imperial coins. Simultaneously, the numbering of *congiaria* stopped. Both developments were probably linked to the short reigns of emperors and the fact that the concept *liberalitas* came to signify imperial mercy to an increasing extent. See Stylow, *Libertas und Liberalitas*, p. 74.

⁵³ Kloft, *Liberalitas Principis*, p. 99.

message could simultaneously promote the imperial dynasty or the imperial house.

It is conspicuous that coins of all denominations display images of *liberalitas*. Even on *aurei* can references to imperial generosity be found. This indicates that *liberalitas* messages were aimed at all segments of the population.

4. *VIRTUS*

The Roman virtue *virtus* is derived from the word *vir* and thus reflects a quality inherent to men, which can be interpreted as signifying bravery.⁵⁴ Noreña defines *virtus* as ‘a quality of manly courage displayed in any public action, especially in the performance of military exploits on behalf of the state’.⁵⁵ On imperial coinage, this virtue is indeed frequently combined with military imagery varying from an armed woman, the personification of *virtus*, to gods shown in their military capacity. Therefore, the link between *virtus* and (the waging of) war, as propagated on coinage, is obvious.⁵⁶

Virtus remained prominent on third-century imperial coinage (*image 14*).⁵⁷ Coin types of some short-lived emperors (Pertinax, Didius Julianus, Geta, Macrinus, Diadumenian, Balbinus, Pupienus, Herennius Etruscus, Hostilian, and Saloninus), however, do not display this particular virtue. The small number of coin types issued during their reigns does not explain the absence of *virtus* in all cases. Under Pertinax, Geta, Macrinus, and Hostilian, a surprisingly high number of coin types was minted. Perhaps the absence of *virtus* on the coinage of these four emperors resulted from military realities. None of these four emperors could achieve *virtus* in battle because none conspicuously led any (large) military campaigns.

There are other exceptions. The emperors Elagabalus and Maximinus Thrax did not issue coin types promoting their *virtus* either.⁵⁸ The case of Elagabalus is perhaps not very surprising and may have stemmed from

⁵⁴ On *virtus* in the Roman Republic, see M. McDonnell, *Roman Manliness. Virtus and the Roman Republic* (New York, 2006).

⁵⁵ Noreña, “The communication of the emperor’s virtues”, p. 159. Originally, *virtus* was also associated with civil aspects. In the course of the imperial period, *virtus* received mainly a military significance, see *LIMC* 8.1 (lemma *Virtus*), p. 273.

⁵⁶ For the appearance of *virtus* in Roman literature, see W. Eisenhut, *Virtus Romana* (München, 1973).

⁵⁷ See Hekster and Manders, ‘Kaiser gegen Kaiser’, pp. 135–144.

⁵⁸ See further *ibid.*, p. 138.



Image 14 *Virtus* (RIC V.2, Probus, no. 816)

military reality as well; after his victory over Macrinus he seems to have had other concerns than waging war, which probably rendered promotion of his *virtus* on coinage unnecessary. Maximinus Thrax, on the other hand, stayed occupied with military activities for almost his whole reign. As we have already seen, he fought near-continuously and exploited his military status on his coinage.⁵⁹ However, whereas his coins show many references to various military victories, his army, and the emperor in military dress (thus indirect references to *virtus*), he did not propagate his *virtus* on coinage directly. Although the emperor showed his *virtus* both indirectly on coins and in reality through continuous warfare, his coins propagated the virtue of *liberalitas* instead. Thus, Maximinus seems to have selected and deployed his virtue types so as mainly to unify the *plebs urbana* with the emperor. The many coin types suggesting military associations were probably already used to secure the soldiers' support, which could have made the propagation of the emperor's *virtus* superfluous. Another possibility is that Maximinus did not have felt the need to emphasize his *virtus*; his military background demonstrated that he was already in possession of some soldierly qualities.⁶⁰

When we look at the overall picture of the propagation of *virtus* in the third century, the following observations can be made. First, from the reign of Pertinax up to the reign of Gordian III, *virtus* was advertised

⁵⁹ See above, pp. 66–67.

⁶⁰ See below, p. 67.

incidentally.⁶¹ Second, from the reign of Gordian III onward, *virtus* was the most frequently propagated virtue.⁶² From 238 onward, *virtus* seems to have been a chief element of imperial propaganda spread by means of coins (with the exception of Decius' sons and Saloninus as already mentioned above). Before 238, only the Severans (and even within that dynasty there are the exceptions of Geta and Elagabalus) and the Gordiani disseminated this virtue. Again, the most intense propagation of *virtus* parallels the onset and continuation of the third-century crisis.

The highest percentages of *virtus* types emerge during the reigns of both Gordiani and from Florian's reign onward; during the rules of Gordian I and II, Florian, Probus, Carus, Carinus, and Numerian the percentages of coin types promoting *virtus* all lie above 13%. Peaks appear under Gordian I (18.8%), Gordian II (25%), and Carinus (19.5%).⁶³ Especially the high percentages for Gordian I and II could have been influenced by the lengths of their reigns. In the third century, it probably was important for emperors to propagate their military prowess first; it demonstrated their ability to rule over the Empire in a period characterized by many military problems. Since both Gordiani were short-lived, they might not

⁶¹ *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 24, 39, 145a)–148b), 171a), 171b), 269, 303–305, 350I, 350J, 430A–431A, 436A, 487, 517–518b), 657, 660, 673–675, 693, 820a), 820b), 830a)–830c), 788, 797; *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 50, 51, 73, 112, 117a), 117b), 147–149, 155, 175–177, 187, 191, 198, 354, 409, 417a), 417b), 456, 458, 466, 468, 477; *RIC* IV.2, Severus Alexander, nos. 77, 89, 90, 181–183, 220–227, 259, 259A, 510, 555, 556, 623–627; *RIC* IV.2, Gordianus I, nos. 6, 13, 14; *RIC* IV.2, Gordianus II, nos. 3, 8.

⁶² *RIC* IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 6, 12, 20, 25, 39, 44, 56, 60, 71, 79, 95, 108, 110, 116, 120, 205, 259a), 259b), 273a)–273c), 281(a), 281(b), 293a)–293c), 309, 326, 327; *RIC* IV.3, Philippus I, nos. 10, 52, 53, 71, 74; *RIC* IV.3, Philippus II, nos. 223, 263; *RIC* IV.3, Trajan Decius, nos. 8, 109a)–109c), 127; *RIC* IV.3, Trebonianus Gallus, nos. 57, 58, 76, 96, 126a), 126b); *RIC* IV.3, Volusianus, nos. 162, 186, 187, 206, 263a), 263b); *RIC* IV.3, Aemilianus, nos. 12, 22, 26, 41, 53, 63; *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, nos. 3, 23, 24, 55, 56, 133–138, 182, 183, 204, 205, 226, 227, 266–271, 292, 293; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 53–59, 64, 99–105, 114, 114a), 181–187a), 197–199, 246–249, 257, 286, 301, 305, 407–411, 423, 424, 454–458; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 5, 6, 16, 17, 88–91, 131–134, 149, 312–332, 364, 365, 378–380, 403–405, 438, 439, 529–539, 589, 596, 612, 623, 624, 667–676, 678; *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 109–113, 123, 172, 195, 224, 225, 227, 253–255; *RIC* V.1, Quintillus, nos. 35–37, 43, 81; *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, nos. 1, 5, 15, 41, 56–58, 74, 97–100, 115, 116, 146–149, 156, 179–184, 210–212, 241, 242, 316–318, 341, 378–380, 388, 407, 408; *RIC* V.1, Tacitus, nos. 12, 67–69, 81, 177–179; *RIC* V.1, Florianus, nos. 13–16, 24, 44–50, 55, 56, 106–109; *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 12–14, 54–58, 110–114, 131, 145, 146, 225–243, 279–288, 301, 304, 312, 426–456, 576–578, 602–605, 801–822, 877–889, 899–902, 912, 913; *RIC* V.2, Carus, nos. 27, 34, 45, 46, 56–58, 65, 88–91, 117, 123–125, 128; *RIC* V.2, Carinus, nos. 223–225, 233–235, 268–272, 282–284, 287, 288, 290, 291, 314a, 321, 325–327, 329; *RIC* V.2, Numerianus, nos. 398–401, 407, 408, 433, 439, 465–470.

⁶³ Because of the small number of coin types minted during the reigns of the Gordiani, the high percentages are probably almost meaningless (see Hekster and Manders, “Kaiser gegen Kaiser”, p. 139).

have had time to lay emphasis on other types of messages.⁶⁴ Besides these peaks, there is a middle group visible with percentages between 5 and 11%, comprising Gordian III, Aemilian, Valerian, Gallienus, Claudius Gothicus, Quintillus, and Aurelian. The lowest percentages (below 5%) come under Septimius Severus, Caracalla, Severus Alexander, Philippus I and II, Decius, Trebonianus Gallus, Volusian, and Tacitus.

Third-century coin types referring to *virtus* are certainly not identical; both legend and image can differ profoundly. Therefore, the analysis of coin types propagating *virtus* involves more complexity than that of coin types referring to other virtues. Most of the coin types under discussion refer to *virtus* in their legends. From among coin types bearing a legend including *virtus*, the legend VIRTUS AVG/AVGG occurs most regularly in the third century. In the cases of the emperors Gallienus, Claudius Gothicus, and Probus, *virtus* is directly associated with the emperor by adding the name of the emperor in the genitive to *virtus* (VIRTUS GALLIENI AVG, VIRTUS CLAUDI AVG, VIRTUS PROBI AVG).⁶⁵

As for images accompanying the legend VIRTUS AVGG/AVGG (with or without the name of the emperor(s) added hereto), third-century coin types can be divided into five groups. The first group contains types depicting a personification of *virtus*. Virtus is portrayed as an armed woman with, occasionally, complementary military attributes. From Septimius Severus up to Valerian (except under Philippus II), Virtus is portrayed on coins bearing the legend VIRTUS AVG/AVGG.⁶⁶

Equally often the emperor himself is depicted on VIRTUS AVG/AVGG coin types.⁶⁷ On the majority of these coins, the depictions of the emperor

⁶⁴ Hekster en Manders, 'Kaiser gegen Kaiser', p. 139.

⁶⁵ RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 53–55, 64; RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 5, 6, 17, 88, 149, 312–315, 364, 378, 403, 529–530a; RIC V.1, Claudius Gothicus, no. 227; RIC V.2, Probus, nos. 13, 145, 287, 288, 312, 604, 605, 810–822, 877–889, 900, 912, 913.

⁶⁶ RIC IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 24, 39, 145a) 145b), 148a), 148b), 171a), 171b), 303, 350], 430A, 431, 657, 660, 673–675; RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 50, 51, 147–149, 176, 354, 466, 468, 477; RIC IV.2, Severus Alexander, nos. 181–183, 259, 259A, 623, 624; RIC IV.2, Gordianus I, nos. 6, 13, 14; RIC IV.2, Gordianus II, nos. 3, 8; RIC IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 6, 12, 39, 44, 56, 60, 71, 79, 205, 273a)–273c), 281(a), 281(b), 293a)–293c), 326; RIC IV.3, Philippus I, nos. 52, 53; RIC IV.3, Trajanus Decius, nos. 8, 109a)–109c), 127; RIC IV.3, Trebonianus Gallus, nos. 57, 58, 76, 96, 126a), 126b); RIC IV.3, Volusianus, nos. 162, 186, 187, 206, 263a), 263b); RIC IV.3, Aemilianus, nos. 12, 22, 41, 53, 63; RIC V.1, Valerianus, no. 136.

⁶⁷ RIC IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 146a), 146b), 305, 693 (possibly nos. 303A, 431A); RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 73, 175, 177, 409 (possibly nos. 417a), 417b)); RIC IV.2, Severus Alexander, nos. 225–227, 627; RIC IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 259a), 259b), 326, 327; RIC IV.3, Philippus I, no. 10; RIC V.1, Valerianus, nos. 205, 292, 293; RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 58, 114, 305, 407, 455–458 (possibly nos. 104, 105, 187, 187a), 408, 409); RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign,

accompany references to military activities (the emperor in military dress, seated on a horse, personifications of Victoria and Virtus, or soldiers). A depiction of Gallienus holding a *bipennis* (battle-axe) and *pelta* (shield) on a coin type minted during his sole reign is unique within this group.⁶⁸ Probably this coin type has some affinity with a provincial coin type struck during Gallienus' reign by the mint of Smyrna and presenting Smyrna in the form of an amazon carrying *bipennis* and *pelta*.⁶⁹ Sometimes the emperor appears in the presence of family members (see coin types of Septimius Severus, Caracalla, Philippus I, Valerian, Gallienus, Carinus), which confirms the dynastic message of some *virtus* types.⁷⁰ On the coins of 16 emperors (Septimius Severus, Caracalla, Severus Alexander, Gordian III, Philippus II, Aemilian, Valerian, Gallienus, Claudius Gothicus, Aurelian, Tacitus, Florian, Probus, Carus, Carinus, and Numerian), (demi-)gods and goddesses (Victoria and Virtus not included) are portrayed next to the emperor, sometimes crowning the ruler or handing over a globe to him.⁷¹ It seems plausible that the representation of the emperor's coronation and his reception of a globe on these coin types show that the ruler's *virtus* played an important role in legitimizing the emperor's power.⁷² These types spread the message that, through his *virtus*, the emperor's claim to

nos. 89, 322–324, 365, 380, 538, 589, 590, 592–594, 670, 676; *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 112, 123; *RIC* V.1, Quintillus, no. 81; *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, nos. 116, 149, 211, 212, 241, 316, 317; *RIC* V.1, Florianus, nos. 13, 16, 44–50, 55, 56, 106–108; *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 12, 54–56, 146, 225, 233, 243, 279–286, 301, 446–450, 801–809, 899; *RIC* V.2, Carus, nos. 123–125, 128; *RIC* V.2, Carinus, nos. 225, 287, 288, 290, 314a, 325–327, 329; *RIC* V.2, Numerianus, nos. 398, 399, 401, 466–470. The emperor's image does not appear on *virtus* types of Gordian I and II, Philippus II, Decius, Trebonianus Gallus, Volusian, Aemilian, and Tacitus.

⁶⁸ *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 676.

⁶⁹ *SNG* Von Aulock no. 2235.

⁷⁰ Septimius Severus: *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus no. 305; Caracalla: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 177; Philippus I: *RIC* IV.3, Philippus I, no. 10; Valerianus, *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, nos. 292 and 293; Gallienus: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 455 and 456; Carinus, *RIC* V.2, Carinus, no. 225 (and probably nos. 314a, 325, 326, 327, 329).

⁷¹ Victoria and Virtus are not included here. Septimius Severus: Roma crowning emperor (*RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus no. 693); Caracalla: emperor crowned by Minerva/Roma (*RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 73), Caracalla (?) crowned by Minerva (*RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 417a) and b)), emperor together with river gods (*RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 175); Gallienus: emperor receiving victory from Roma (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 457, *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 322); Aurelian: emperor receiving globe from Sol (*RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, nos. 316 and 317); Probus: emperor receiving globe from/ crowned by Mars (*RIC* V.2, Probus nos. 146, 281, 282); Carinus: Carus crowned by Sol and Carinus crowned by Hercules (*RIC* V.2, Carinus, no. 225). In the cases of Carus, Carinus, and Numerian it is not clear whether Jupiter or a family member of the emperor (Carinus on Carus' coins or Carus on Carinus' and Numerian's coins) is presenting the globe to him.

⁷² On the emperor receiving a globe from Jupiter, see above p. 105.

power was justified. Moreover, deities' involvement in both ceremonies communicated divine providence and influence in imperial matters in general and in the emperor's appointment in particular. This multifaceted imagery, present on coin types bearing the legend *VIRTVS AVG/AVGG* and an image of (amongst others) the emperor, made the messages spread by the coins complex and, therefore, susceptible to many kinds of interpretations.

Also minted under Gallienus was an exceptional coin type depicting the emperor together with the legend *VIRTVS AVG/AVGG*.⁷³ On this type, the helmeted head of the emperor is pictured as the head of Mars. Gallienus' *virtus* was thus presented as equal to Mars' bravery; apparently, the emperor, as the brave earthly *heros*, was placed on a par with the valiant Olympian deity Mars.⁷⁴

The third group of coin types bearing *VIRTVS AVG/AVGG* legends consists of types showing images of deities only.⁷⁵ They, in turn, can be divided, first, into types presenting gods who are frequently associated with the emperor's *virtus* and, second, into types depicting deities who are rarely connected with the particular imperial virtue on the coin. Mars and Hercules belong into the first category.⁷⁶ On coin types minted in the first half of the third century, Mars appears only on the coinage of Septimius Severus and Philippus II.⁷⁷ From the reign of Gallienus onward, however, Mars emerges frequently on imperial coinage propagating the emperor's *virtus*.⁷⁸ Images of Hercules, meanwhile, are scarce on coin types from the

⁷³ *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 89.

⁷⁴ This emperor's identification with Mars can be understood as part of the sacralization process that set in during the second half of the third century, see pp. 143–145; Herklotz, "Der Kaiserkult", p. 945.

⁷⁵ For the link between *virtus Augusti* and deities, see also above, pp. 111–112; Hekster and Manders, "Kaiser gegen Kaiser", pp. 140–142.

⁷⁶ As is described above (p. 112), the difference between Mars and Hercules consists of Mars' connection with war in general and Hercules' connotation with invincibility. As to the connection between *virtus Augusti* and Hercules, see Hekster and Manders, "Kaiser gegen Kaiser", pp. 141–142.

⁷⁷ *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 436A, 487; *RIC* IV.3, Philippus II, nos. 223, 263.

⁷⁸ In the second half of the third century Mars appears on *VIRTVS AVG(G)* coins of Gallienus (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 56, 57, 102, 103, 184–186, 246; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 90, 131, 132, 134, 316–321, 329, 330, 364, 591), Claudius Gothicus (*RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, no. 172), Aurelian (*RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, nos. 1, 5, 15, 97, 98, 156, 179–183, 210), Tacitus (*RIC* V.1, Tacitus, nos. 12, 177, 178), Florian (*RIC* V.1, Florianus, nos. 14, 15, 24, 109), Probus (*RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 57, 58, 146, 226–228, 240–242, 281, 282, 304, 426–433, 578, 602, 603), Carus (*RIC* V.2, Carus, nos. 34, 65), and Carinus (*RIC* V.2, Carinus, no. 270).

first half of the century; only coins of Gordian III present them.⁷⁹ During the second half of the third century, the invincible hero, appears on VIRTVS AVG/AVGG types of Aemilian, Gallienus, Aurelian, Probus, Carinus, and Numerian.⁸⁰ Although Mars displays connections with imperial *virtus* more often than Hercules, the portrayal of both shows roughly the same pattern of diachronic change on third-century coin types propagating the emperor's *virtus*. Whereas coin types showing a link between VIRTVS AVG/AVGG and both deities were relatively scarce in the first half of the third century, Mars and Hercules appeared more often on the same kinds of types in the second half of the century.

In contrast to coin types bearing the legend VIRTVS AVG/AVGG together with an image of either Mars or Hercules, *virtus* types depicting Minerva, Romulus or Roma (with or without a depiction of Victoria) were not struck frequently in the third century.⁸¹ Wholly unique is the link between VIRT AVG and an image of Vulcan together with Minerva. This combination appears only on a coin type of Claudius Gothicus.⁸²

Coin types bearing the legend VIRTVS AVG/AVGG and displaying an individual soldier constitute a fourth group. The diachronic change in this group's frequency nearly parallels the development of Mars on *virtus* types: where in the first half of the third century these types appear only under Septimius Severus, from the reign of Valerian onward they were struck continuously during every reign (except under Florian).⁸³

⁷⁹ RIC IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 95, 108, 110, 116, 120, 309. As we have already seen above (p. 111), Gordian III was the first emperor who associated the emperor's *virtus* with Hercules.

⁸⁰ RIC IV.3, Aemilianus, no. 26; RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 454; RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 5, 6, 16, 91, 327, 328, 331, 537, 539, 595, 623, 624, 671–673, 678; RIC V.1, Aurelianus, nos. 57, 58, 74, 318; RIC V.2, Probus, nos. 14, 576, 577, 901, 902; RIC V.2, Carinus, nos. 233–235, 268, 269, 271, 272, 284, 291; RIC V.2, Numerianus, nos. 407, 408, 439, 465.

⁸¹ Minerva: Claudius Gothicus (RIC V.1, Claudius Gothicus, no. 225). Romulus: Severus Alexander (RIC IV.2, Severus Alexander, nos. 223, 224, 625, 626), Gallienus (possibly RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 104, 105, 187, 187a), 408, 409). Roma: Septimius Severus (RIC IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 304, 350I, 517–518b), 693, 820a), 820b), 830a)–830c)), Valerian (RIC V.1, Valerianus, nos. 136a), 268).

⁸² RIC V.1, Claudius Gothicus, no. 224. Both Vulcan and Minerva appear on other types of Claudius Gothicus (Minerva: RIC V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 203, 225, 236; Vulcan: RIC V.1, Claudius Gothicus, no. 215).

⁸³ RIC IV.1, Septimius Severus, no. 147; RIC V.1, Valerianus, nos. 3, 23, 24, 55, 56, 133–135, 137, 138, 182, 183, 204, 226, 227, 266, 267, 269–271; RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 59, 99–101, 114a), 181–183, 197–199, 247–249, 257, 286, 301, 410, 423, 424; RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 133, 325, 326, 379, 404, 405, 438, 439, 531–536, 612, 667–669; RIC V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 109–111, 113, 195, 253, 254; RIC V.1, Quintillus, nos. 35–37, 43; RIC V.1, Aurelianus, nos. 41, 341; RIC V.1, Tacitus, nos. 67–69, 81; RIC V.2, Probus, nos. 110–114, 131, 229–232, 234–239, 434–445; RIC V.2, Carus, nos. 27, 45, 46, 56–58, 88–91; RIC V.2, Carinus, nos. 282, 283; RIC V.2, Numerianus, nos. 400, 433.

Apparently, these types reflect the growing importance of the army as the century progressed. After all, the emperors depended heavily on their legions in times of increasing military problems. Moreover, the armed forces exploited their power by electing and rejecting emperors.⁸⁴

The fifth group encompasses types presenting a trophy together with captives, thus advertizing a direct connection between victory and *virtus*. Gallienus, Claudius Gothicus, Aurelian, and Probus, all having gained one or more major military victories (and/or proclaimed alleged victories) during their reigns, issued these types.⁸⁵

Besides the five groups of coin types which all bear the legend VIRTUS AVG/AVGG, types with the same legend (sometimes without AVG) but with the addition of *invictus* were issued: during Septimius Severus' and Caracalla's reigns coins propagating INVICTA VIRTUS were struck, Probus issued VIRTUS INVICTI AVG types and under Carus VIRTUS CARI INVICTI AVG types were minted.⁸⁶ The messages spread by the legends of these coins have a powerful overtone, for the emperor's *virtus* is explicitly associated with invincibility. The images that go together with these legends communicate similar power. On two coin types of the Severi, the emperor is depicted seated on a horse while brandishing a javelin at a foe.⁸⁷ Later, coin types bearing the legend VIRTUS INVICTI AVG issued by Probus show the same martial rhetoric as the coins of the two Severan emperors. The imagery on the majority of these reverse types minted under Probus consists of the emperor galloping and spearing a fallen enemy (with or without Victoria).⁸⁸ Another coin type presents Probus (with *parazonium* and Victoria) holding his foot on a captive while he is being crowned by Sol.⁸⁹ Because Hercules was depicted on Carus' coins, his type departs the aggressive imagery on the coins of the three other emperors.⁹⁰ However, just as the legends demonstrate, the accompanying imagery on the coins of these four emperors (either aggressive war rhetoric or a depiction of

⁸⁴ See above, pp. 63 and 88.

⁸⁵ RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 674, 675; RIC V.1, Claudius Gothicus, no. 255; RIC V.1, Aurelianus, no. 99; RIC V.2, Probus, nos. 820–822.

⁸⁶ RIC IV.1, Septimius Severus, no. 269; RIC IV.1, Caracalla, no. 155; RIC V.2, Probus, nos. 451–456; RIC V.2, Carus, no. 117.

⁸⁷ RIC IV.1, Septimius Severus no. 269, RIC IV.1, Caracalla no. 155.

⁸⁸ RIC V.2, Probus nos. 451, 452, 453, 454, 455.

⁸⁹ RIC V.2, Probus no. 456.

⁹⁰ RIC V.2, Carus, no. 117.

Hercules, symbol of invincibility) emphasizes the emperor's invincibility as a consequence of his military bravery.⁹¹

Some third-century coin types also foregrounded the army's *virtus*. As already explained above, the *virtus* of the emperor's instrument for maintaining his order reflected the *virtus* of the emperor himself.⁹² Coin types minted in the third century convey the bravery of the soldiers in several ways. On coins of Gordian I and Philippus I straightforward VIRTUS EXERCITVS is propagated, both types adding a depiction of Virtus to the legend.⁹³ VIRTUS MILITVM is visible on coin types issued by Gallienus, Aurelian, and Tacitus.⁹⁴ In addition, coins of Aurelian praise *virtus* of particular divisions of the army, propagating VIRTUS EQVIT and VIRTUS ILLVRICI.⁹⁵ These types which propagate *virtus* in combination with *militum*, *exercitus* and *equitum* did only emerge from the middle of the third century onward.⁹⁶ A connection between the appearance of these types and the many military problems which characterize this period is obvious. In addition, the fact that the majority of these reverse types bear an image of the emperor confirms the hypothesis that *virtus militum* was closely associated with the emperor's *virtus*.

Of course, some coin types exhibited a *virtus* theme but bore legends other than those already mentioned. First, types without *virtus* in the coin's legend were struck under Septimius Severus, Caracalla, and Severus Alexander. Bearing legends containing standard imperial titulature, the imagery shown on these types varies from emperor to emperor; Severus is being crowned by Virtus (with or without Victoria), the coins of Caracalla, Severus Alexander, and Gordian III depict a personification of *virtus* and Severus Alexander issued types on which the emperor appears together with Victoria and Virtus.⁹⁷ Second, under Severus Alexander two types

⁹¹ On the terms *victor* and *invictus* and Alexander the Great's influence, see S. Weinstock, "Victor and invictus", *HTR* 50.3 (1957), pp. 211–247.

⁹² See above, p. 158.

⁹³ *RIC* IV.2, Gordianus I, no. 13; *RIC* IV.3, Philippus I, nos. 71 and 74.

⁹⁴ *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 411; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 332; *RIC* V.1, Aurelian, nos. 56, 146, 147, 148, 184, 242, 407, 408; *RIC* V.1, Tacitus, no. 179.

⁹⁵ VIRTUS EQVIT: *RIC* V.1, Aurelian, nos. 100, 115. VIRTUS ILLVRICI: *RIC* V.1, Aurelian, nos. 378, 379, 380, 388. For more references to the Illyrian army, see below, pp. 256–257.

⁹⁶ *Virtus* in combination with *militum*, *exercitus* and *equitum* appears only from the middle of the third century onward, see W. Eisenhut, "Virtus als göttliche Gestalt", *RESuppl.* 14 (1974), pp. 896–910; p. 908.

⁹⁷ Septimius Severus crowned by Virtus: *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 788. and 797. Personification of *virtus*: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 112, 117a), 117b), 187, 191, 198, 456, and 458; *RIC* IV.2, Severus Alexander, nos. 77, 89, and 90; *RIC* IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 20 and 25. Emperor together with Victory and Virtus: *RIC* IV.2, Severus Alexander, no. 510.

were struck consisting of the legend FIDES MILITVM and depictions of Jupiter, the emperor, and Virtus.⁹⁸ Third, a coin type propagating VIRTVS FALERI and showing an image of quiver, lion's skin, club, vase and bow was minted under Gallienus.⁹⁹ It seems that Gallienus wanted to link his *virtus* to his descent from an illustrious family – his mother belonged to the Egnatii from Falerii (Etruria) – in order to reinforce his position through both martial and genealogical associations.¹⁰⁰ Another possibility is that he wanted to gain the loyalty of the inhabitants of the Italian peninsula by broadcasting this kind of (geographical) message.¹⁰¹ Moreover, this coin type propagates a connection between Gallienus and Hercules by representing Hercules' attributes.

5. PIETAS

Whereas *virtus* occupied a prominent place within the web of imperial virtues, *pietas* might have been, according to Charlesworth, the most important virtue that communicated the emperor's worthiness (*dignitas*) to rule.¹⁰² Generally, *pietas* can be described as a course of practices characterized by a sense of duty, devotion, and piety aimed at benefiting gods, people (mainly family), and homeland, and, during the Empire, the emperor. The emperor himself did thus not only express *pietas* himself, he was also its object.

As Ulrich shows, until Commodus' death, the *pietas* of the emperor was propagated on imperial coinage regularly.¹⁰³ In the third century, however, references to *pietas* on imperial coins were less common than in earlier periods (*image 15*).¹⁰⁴ Obviously, more importance was attached to propagating other virtues, such as for example *virtus* and *providentia*. Within

⁹⁸ RIC IV.2, Severus Alexander, nos. 555 and 556.

⁹⁹ RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 596.

¹⁰⁰ De Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus*, p. 134. On Gallienus' descent from the Egnatii see Birley, *The Roman Government of Britain*, p. 358. See also Mennen, *Status and power*, pp. 25–26 and pp. 100–103. See further below, p. 295.

¹⁰¹ See also below, p. 295.

¹⁰² M.P. Charlesworth, "Pietas and Victoria: the emperor and the citizen", *JRS* 33 (1943), pp. 1–10; p. 7.

¹⁰³ T. Ulrich, *Pietas (pius) als politischer Begriff im römischen Staate bis zum Tode des Kaisers Commodus* (Wrocław, 1930).

¹⁰⁴ See Noreña, "The communication of the emperor's virtues", p. 156 and Hekster and Manders, "Kaiser gegen Kaiser", p. 138. However, *pius felix* was included in the imperial titulature of all emperors from Caracalla onward, concerning which Hekster, *Commodus*, p. 94.



Image 15 *Pietas* (RIC IV.3, Volusianus, no. 182)

the third century, *pietas* received slightly more attention after Herennius Etruscus than before. Not only did more individual Augusti propagate *pietas* from Herennius Etruscus onward, but the proportions of *pietas* types are also higher. The highest percentages of coin numbers presenting imperial *pietas* can only be found under Gordian I (12.5%), Herennius Etruscus (30%), Trebonianus Gallus (7.9%), Volusian (7.5%), and Numerian (10.5%).¹⁰⁵ The large numbers of *pietas* types minted during the reigns of Trebonianus Gallus and Volusian might have a connection with the imperial propaganda with regard to the inauguration of a new age. After all, Trebonianus Gallus and Volusian issued coin types propagating SAECVLVM NOVVM which were struck simultaneously with their *pietas* types.¹⁰⁶ Coin types bearing the legend SAECVLVM NOVVM were issued for the first time under Philippus I and must have alluded to the celebration of the thousandth anniversary of Rome.¹⁰⁷ Apparently, the marking of Rome's thousand years heralded a new era in which an important role was attributed to *pietas*.

Trebonianus' and Volusian's 'religious' motivation for issuing a large number of coin types propagating the emperor's *pietas* leads us automatically to the various senses in which *pietas* can be understood. Ulrich demonstrates that the emperor's *pietas*, put forward on coins, connoted

¹⁰⁵ The high percentages of Gordian I and Herennius Etruscus are somewhat misleading because only a small number of coin types survived from both reigns.

¹⁰⁶ See also Hekster and Manders, "Kaiser gegen Kaiser", pp. 139–140.

¹⁰⁷ RIC IV.3, Philippus I, nos. 25a), 25b), 86a), 86b). They were also issued under the reign of Philippus II and Hostilian (RIC IV.3, Philippus II, no. 244; RIC IV.3, Hostilianus, nos. 205a), 205b)).

dutiful relationships with not only the gods but also, for instance, the ruler's family (predecessors and successors included) and the state.¹⁰⁸ This conceptual versatility emerges also in the symmetry inherent to *pietas*; this virtue was not only aimed at superior powers (gods, the emperor, *pater familias*) but could also be expressed by people holding positions of power toward their dependants (emperor toward subject, *pater familias* toward wife, son or daughter).¹⁰⁹

Some third-century *pietas* types show clearly to whom or what *pietas* was expressed. Under Balbinus a type showing the legend PIETAS MVTVA AVGG together with a depiction of clasped hands was struck.¹¹⁰ This type probably evokes the *pietas* that both Augusti, Balbinus and Pupienus, expressed to each other and, therefore, to *concordia* between the two rulers. Philippus I issued PIETAS AVGG types showing both the bust of his son Philippus II and the bust of his wife Otacilia Severa, whereas under Decius a type presenting the legend PIETAS AVGG and depicting his sons Herennius Etruscus and Hostilian was minted.¹¹¹ It is evident that these types emphasize the emperors' *pietas* toward their families and intended successors. The same can be said for *pietas* types that honor the marriage between Gordian III and Sabinia Tranquillina in the summer of 241.¹¹²

Types bearing the legend PIETAS (AVG/AVGG) and portraying a deity were issued under Septimius Severus (depicting Vesta), Herennius Etruscus, Hostilian, Carinus, and Numerian (showing Mercury).¹¹³ It is clear that these coins express *pietas* toward the depicted gods.

In addition, PIETAS AVG(G) types on which the emperor is depicted as making a sacrifice conveyed *pietas* toward the gods on the part of the emperor, as head of the Roman religion.¹¹⁴ However, the possibility that

¹⁰⁸ Mattingly argues that *pietas*, communicated on coinage, was only aimed at the gods, see Mattingly, *BMCRE* III, xcv (see further Noreña, "The communication of the emperor's virtues", p. 158).

¹⁰⁹ Noreña, "The communication of the emperor's virtues", p. 158.

¹¹⁰ *RIC* IV.2, Balbinus, no. 12.

¹¹¹ Philippus I: *RIC* IV.3, Philippus I, nos. 43a) and 43b). Decius: *RIC* IV.3, Trajan Decius, no. 32.

¹¹² *RIC* IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 122 and 129.

¹¹³ *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, no. 350F; *RIC* IV.3, Herennius Etruscus, nos. 151a), 151b); *RIC* IV.3, Hostilianus, no. 188; *RIC* V.2, Carinus, nos. 264, 265, 279; *RIC* V.2, Numerianus, nos. 403, 413–416, 436, 437.

¹¹⁴ *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, no. 413; *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, nos. 284, 285; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 618; *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, no. 138; Gallienus' coin types minted during the joint reign with his father depict both emperors sacrificing together with the legend PIETAS AVGG (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 446, 447). The dynastic message of these types is obvious.

the emperor's sacrifice to the gods communicated instead, for example, the security of Rome or the Roman people cannot be excluded. After all, the emperor as *pontifex maximus* had to guarantee the *pax deorum*, which was a source of considerable importance to the Roman Empire and its inhabitants. Thus, the emperor's *pietas* did not fulfill obligations only toward the gods. The same can be said of types that bear the legend PIETAS AVGVSTI/AVGVSTORVM and portray either the personification of *pietas* with religious attributes or the sacrificial implements.¹¹⁵ The depiction of the religious/priestly attributes verifies that the gods were the object of the emperor's *pietas*. The gods, however, could have been called upon to communicate the emperor's *pietas* toward his subjects, state and/or family. On the other hand, types referring to the emperor's *pietas* through the legend and depicting Pietas without any 'religious' attributes give no definite answer as to the recipient(s) of imperial *pietas*.

Exceptional *pietas* types appeared under Severus Alexander, Gallienus, and Claudius Gothicus. Severus Alexander issued a coin type praising the *pietas* of the soldiers; this type bears the legend PIETAS MILITVM and shows a picture of Pietas with military standards.¹¹⁶ On coins of Gallienus and Claudius Gothicus the emperor is labeled *conservator pietatis* and is depicted with a scepter (and, on Gallienus' type with a *patera*) and a kneeling figure.¹¹⁷ In addition to *conservator pietatis*, Claudius Gothicus is addressed as *restitutor pietatis* on a coin type which depicts the emperor while he is making a sacrifice.¹¹⁸ These coin types, labeling the emperor either *conservator pietatis* or *restitutor pietatis*, emphasize the role of the

¹¹⁵ Pietas with religious attributes: *RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, nos. 126, 127; *RIC* IV.2, Severus Alexander, nos. 170, 209, 292, 293; *RIC* IV.3, Hostilianus, no. 220; *RIC* IV.3, Trebonianus Gallus, nos. 12, 22, 41, 42, 72, 73, 116a)–117b); *RIC* IV.3, Volusianus, nos. 150, 151, 158, 163, 182, 191, 192, 212, 257, 258a), 258b); *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 449, 505–507, 578, 579; *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 93–96, 120, 121; *RIC* V.2, Numerianus, nos. 396, 397. Under Septimius Severus and Aemilian types showing Pietas sacrificing over or at an altar combined with a legend consisting of standard imperial titulature were struck (*RIC* IV.1 Septimius Severus, no. 321A; *RIC* IV.3, Aemilianus, no. 59). Sacrificial implements: *RIC* IV.2, Gordianus I nos. 15, 16; *RIC* IV.3, Herennius Etruscus, no. 152; *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, no. 246, *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 261; *RIC* V.1, Quintillus, no. 86; *RIC* V.2, Carinus, no. 266. They could refer to the cooptation of the emperor in the priestly college of the *pontifices*. See Büsing, "Zum pontifikalen Aspekt römischer Münzen", p. 44. However, Büsing speaks about these coin types in relation to the cooptation of a Caesar in the pontifical college whereas all the coin types discussed here were minted when the particular emperors were already Augustus. See also above, p. 137 n. 192. On *pietas* (or the emperor) sacrificing on PIETAS AVG coins, see also Gordon, "The veil of power", pp. 215–216.

¹¹⁶ *RIC* IV.2, Severus Alexander, no. 171.

¹¹⁷ *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 171 and 171a. *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, no. 28.

¹¹⁸ *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, no. 188.

emperor both as moral *exemplum* for his subjects and as the guardian/restorer of respect (standing at the basis of everything).¹¹⁹ Finally, types disseminating the rather optimistic message *pietas saeculi* were minted during the joint reign of Valerian and Gallienus.¹²⁰ These types depict an infant together with a goat. These images can be interpreted as representations of Jupiter and Amalthea, the goat that fed Jupiter on Crete in Greek and Roman mythology.¹²¹ Since the image of Jupiter and Amalthea refers to the dawning of a *saeculum aureum*, these types point probably to the positive result of fulfilling piety to the gods.¹²² Emphasis on the (future) prosperous state of the Empire propagated confidence in the (contemporary) ruler(s) coping with various types of problems.

6. AEQUITAS

Every emperor had to possess the quality *aequitas* in order to apply the *ius gentium* when the *ius civile* could not be employed. Concerning the meanings of the concept *aequitas*, however, a distinction between the appearance of *aequitas* on coinage and the overall use of the term *aequitas* must be made. Generally, *aequitas* is closely related to another imperial virtue, *iustitia*. The fact that Cicero uses *iustitia* and *aequitas* interchangeably in his *De officiis* illustrates the close connection between *aequitas* and *iustitia*.¹²³ It is therefore clear that *aequitas* could belong to the judicial sphere, although, one could argue, *aequitas* includes meanings beyond the semantic range of *iustitia*; while *iustitia* refers more to acting according to the letter of the law, *aequitas* connotes acting according to the spirit of the law.¹²⁴ 'Justice' is thus probably the best translation for *iustitia*, whereas *aequitas* can be translated as 'fairness'.¹²⁵

As for the imperial virtue *aequitas* as represented on coinage, however, the meaning of *aequitas* can be inferred more closely. Noreña

¹¹⁹ Respect standing at the basis of everything: Dio Chrysostom, *Orationes* 40.

¹²⁰ *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 393 and 394.

¹²¹ See the interpretation of no. 393 in the *RIC*, p. 99.

¹²² On Jupiter and Amalthea referring to *saeculum aureum* see F. Canciani and A. Costantini, "Zeus/Iuppiter", *LIMC* 8.1, p. 460. See further below, p. 284 with n. 67 and 70.

¹²³ Cicero, *De officiis* 2.5.18 (*aequitas*) and 3.6.28 (*iustitia*). See further Wallace-Hadrill, "The emperor and his virtues", p. 302.

¹²⁴ See further H. Lange, "Die Wörter AEQVITAS und IVSTITIA auf römischen Münzen", *ZRG* 52 (Weimar, 1932), pp. 296–314; p. 311.

¹²⁵ The translation of *aequitas* as 'fairness' was already proposed by other scholars, see Noreña, "The communication of the emperor's virtues", pp. 157–158.

demonstrates that in the case of *aequitas* message and medium are geared to one another:

The Aequitas type is largely interchangeable with the Moneta type, both in terms of iconography and historical development, and the introduction of the type [Aequitas] under Galba appears to respond to the Moneta theme on the rebel coinage of A.D. 68. At least from the perspective of the imperial mint, then, the more restricted sense of imperial *aequitas* as the just administration of the mint seems to be the principal message. This emphasis on *aequitas* reflects the importance of the Empire's finances and the emperor's just administration of them.¹²⁶

Emphasis on just administration of imperial finances by means of referring to the imperial virtue *aequitas* emerged more frequently on third-century imperial coins than the other four recurrent virtues, *providentia*, *liberalitas*, *virtus*, and *pietas* (image 16). From among the 35 Augusti in the period 193–284, only nine did not refer to their *aequitas* on coinage. These nine emperors were all short-lived and, except for Aemilian, issued few coin types.¹²⁷ Generally, the percentages of *aequitas* coin types issued during each reign remained relatively low; the mean lies at 2.3%. However, four peaks can be discerned in the diachronic apportioning of the representation of *aequitas* on third-century imperial coins. The first large peak appears for the reign of Pertinax and the second, smaller peak for the reigns of Severus Alexander and Maximinus Thrax.¹²⁸ The third peak comprises the reigns of Gordian III, Philippus I, Philippus II, Decius, Herennius Etruscus, Hostilian, Trebonianus Gallus and Volusian. In these cases, the percentages of *aequitas* coin types issued per reign are nearly all (considerably) higher than the third-century mean.¹²⁹ The percentage of coin types propagating *aequitas* issued by Carinus is 6.5% and forms

¹²⁶ Ibid., p. 158.

¹²⁷ Didius Julianus, Diadumenian, Gordian I and II, Balbinus, Pupienus, Herennius Etruscus, Aemilian, and Saloninus.

¹²⁸ Pertinax: 9.8% (*RIC* IV.1, Pertinax, nos. 1a), 1b), 14, 32a), 32b)). Severus Alexander: 3.5% (*RIC* IV.2, Severus Alexander, nos. 51, 63, 64, 78, 126–128A, 185, 186, 228, 229, 274, 443, 459–462, 546, 547). Maximinus Thrax: 2.9% (*RIC* IV.2, Maximinus Thrax, nos. 7, 8, 113).

¹²⁹ With the exception of Decius and Herennius Etruscus. Gordian III: 4.5% (*RIC* IV.3, Gordian III, nos. 34, 40, 47, 51, 57, 63, 72A, 133a)–134b), 177a), 177b), 267(a), 267(b), 277, 286a)–286c)) Philippus I: 4% (*RIC* IV.3, Philippus I, nos. 27a), 27b), 54, 55, 57, 82, 166a), 166b), 166c)), Philippus II: 6.8% (*RIC* IV.3, Philippus II, nos. 228, 240a), 240b)), Decius: 1.9% (*RIC* IV.3, Trajan Decius, nos. 44a)–45), Herennius Etruscus: 0%, Hostilian: 7.5% (*RIC* IV.3, Hostilianus, nos. 202a)–202c)), Trebonianus Gallus: 2.9% (*RIC* IV.3, Trebonianus Gallus, nos. 16, 80, 81, 101), Volusian: 4.1% (*RIC* IV.3, Volusianus, nos. 142, 153, 166, 215, 225, 246)).



Image 16 *Aequitas* (RIC IV.3, Philippos I, no. 27b))

the fourth peak.¹³⁰ Apart from the above mentioned nine short-lived emperors' complete omission of *aequitas* from their coins, three low points are striking. During the reigns of Caracalla, Aurelian and Probus, low numbers of *aequitas* coin types were struck.¹³¹ As for the representation of virtues, it seems that these emperors were more concerned with propagating other virtues; Caracalla stressed mainly *liberalitas* and *virtus*, while Aurelian and Probus placed the most emphasis on *virtus*. Considering the aforementioned meaning of *aequitas* which is related to imperial finances, one would expect, however, that especially Aurelian would have stressed *aequitas* more on his coins; this emperor put down a revolt of mint workers who had committed fraud.¹³² Nevertheless, inasmuch as 26 Augusti referred to *aequitas* on their coins and the percentages are relatively low, the propagation of *aequitas* might have remained commonplace but not seen as highly important.

Little variation characterizes the legends and iconography present on third-century *aequitas* types. Legends consist mainly of AEQVITAS AVG/AVGG, and the images present personifications of either Aequitas or Moneta holding their attributes (scales and/or *cornucopiae*). Sometimes a heap of metal or coinage is depicted. Iconographic exceptions appear only on coin types of Septimius Severus and Caracalla. On these types, the emperors sit on a chair (with or without scepter) while Aequitas is presented

¹³⁰ RIC V.2, Carinus, nos. 212, 213, 236–241.

¹³¹ Caracalla: 0.4% (RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 31, 114, 507), Aurelian: 0.2% (RIC V.1, Aurelianus, no. 45), Probus: 0.2% (RIC V.2, Probus, nos. 150, 637).

¹³² See above, p. 17 with n. 35.

next to them.¹³³ The direct influence of the emperor on finances is communicated here.

Some *aequitas* coin types minted under Septimius Severus, Caracalla, Geta, Elagabalus, Philippus I and Gallienus bear the legend AEQVITAS PVBLICA.¹³⁴ In view of the concept *aequitas*' numismatic connotation of the just administration of imperial finances, the adjective *publica* probably refers to 'the state' and not to 'the people'. This legend can thus be interpreted as promoting the *aequitas* of the imperial center. Although in this case *aequitas* is not directly linked to the figure of the emperor, the meaning of AEQVITAS PVBLICA does not differ much from AEQVITAS AVG/AVGG.

¹³³ *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, no. 154; *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 31.

¹³⁴ *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 833, 835; *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 114, 507; *RIC* IV.1, Geta, nos. 183, 189; *RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, no. 344; *RIC* IV.3, Philippus I, no. 55; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 1.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE DAWNING OF A GOLDEN AGE

The emperor's possession of the virtues propagated on imperial coins provided the inhabitants of the Roman Empire with both material and immaterial benefits. Coin types that refer to material benefits (e.g. money, corn, games, *thermae*) have been allocated into the representational category '*euergesia*'. The category '*saeculum aureum*' encompasses those types referring to immaterial benefits, and is discussed in this chapter.

Although this type of propaganda was already a permanent theme on imperial coins of earlier periods, the circulation of messages referring to the prosperous state of (parts of) the Empire expanded in the period during which the Roman world faced the most pressing difficulties.¹ Few areas of the Empire experienced prosperity in the period 193–284, yet imperial coinage would lead one to suspect otherwise (see figure 27).² This discrepancy between publicity and practice implies that coin types propagating *saeculum aureum* not always referred to actual immaterial benefits. A substantial proportion of these third-century coin types must thus reflect promises, wishes or efforts to obscure a reality that was characterized by grave military problems, financial deficits and difficulties regarding imperial succession. This apparent link between the problematic state of the Empire and the high number of coin types communicating prosperity and success can probably be explained by attempts of the imperial authorities to maintain or (re)establish the subjects' confidence in the regime and to guarantee the unity within the threatened Empire.

Representations of success and prosperity on third-century coinage consist of references, through legend, image or both, to *abundantia*, *concordia*, *fides*, *felicitas*, *fortuna*, *laetitia*, *libertas*, *pax*, *salus*, *securitas*, *spes*, and *uberitas*.³ These particular benefits, which appear on most coins together

¹ M. Amit, "Propagande de succès et d'euphorie dans l'empire romain", *Iura* 16.1 (1965), pp. 52–75; p. 75.

² Some regions within the Roman Empire flourished during the third century and/or were not or hardly affected by crisis, see above pp. 11–12 with n. 5.

³ Coin types that bear a specific military connotation (such as *FIDES EXERCITVS* (or *EXERCITI*)/*MILITVM*/LEGIONVM/EQVITVM/PRAET/VICTOR, *CONCORDIA MILITVM*/EXERCITVS (or *EXERCITI*)/EQVIT/LEGIONVM, *FELICITAS EXERCITI*, *PAX EXERCITI*,

with additions such as AVG(G), PVBLICA, FVNDATA, VBIQVE, FELIX and BONA, point to different aspects of prosperity, namely happiness, hope, faith, harmony, liberty, peace, wealth, health and security.⁴ *Felicitas*, *laetitia* and *securitas*, moreover, are often combined with adjuncts of time (*temporum* and *saeculi*) as well as adjuncts of place (*orbis*, *imperii*). Rare types that bear the legends SAECVLVM NOVVM, MILIARVM SAECVLVM, SAECVLVM FRVGIFERVM, BONVS EVENTVS and TELLVS STABILITAS also propagate the Empire's prosperous state, whereas *oriens* can be considered a more abstract rendering of the dawning of a golden age.⁵

In modern literature, attention has usually been paid solely to the representation of one of the aforementioned immaterial benefits.⁶ Amit's article in *Iura* offers an exception to this. This author focuses on numismatic references to *pax*, *securitas*, *salus*, *felicitas*, *fortuna*, *laetitia*, and *hilaritas* which, altogether, he considers propaganda of success and euphoria. Therefore, Amit's contribution has been of great significance to this chapter, which, however, takes the issues one step further. It provides not only a quantitative analysis of all third-century coin types referring to success and euphoria or, in other words, to a golden age, but also an in-depth examination, both quantitatively and qualitatively, of four of the most frequent third-century immaterial benefits.

SALVS MILITVM) are divided into the category 'military representation', whereas coin types with dynastic connotations (CONCORDIA AVGG, CONCORDIA FELIX in combination with an image of Caracalla and Plautilla or CONCORDIA AVG together with an image of emperor and empress clasping hands) belong to the category 'dynastic representation'. Types referring to the eternal state of a particular benefit (CONCORDIA AETERNA, PAX AETERNA, SECVRITAS PERPETVA, FELICITAS AETERNA, SPEI PERPETVAE etc.) are divided into the category 'Aeternitas messages'. Coin types bearing the legend FORTUNA REDVX are considered belonging to the representational category 'elevation'. However, the below discussion of particular immaterial benefits (*felicitas*, *pax*, *securitas*, *salus*) includes all types referring to these specific benefits and not only coin types that are assigned to the category 'saeculum aureum'.

⁴ Rare additions on third-century coin types referring to *salus* and *libertas*: SAL GEN HVM (*RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 42a)–42c), 350), OB CONSERVATIONEM SALVTIS (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 59, 144, 423), OB LIBERTAT(EM) REC(APTAM) (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 60, 61, 145, 424), OB REDDIT LIBERT (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 146, 247, 425). A coin type of Pertinax bearing the legend LIBERATIS CIVIBVS can be understood as referring to *libertas* (*RIC* IV.1, Pertinax, no. 6).

⁵ Coins bearing the legend ORIENS (AVG(G)) refer both to the dawning of a golden age and to the geographic east and are therefore divided into the category 'saeculum aureum' and 'geographical messages', see above, pp. 127–128.

⁶ See for instance H. Erkell, *Augustus, felicitas, fortuna: lateinische Wortstudien* (Göteborg, 1952); E. Wistrand, *Felicitas imperatoria* (Göteborg, 1987); U. Instinsky, *Sicherheit als politisches Problem des römischen Kaisertums* (Mainz, 1952); M.A. Marwood, *The Roman Cult of Salus* (Oxford, 1988); L. Winkler, *Salus. Vom Staatskult zur politischen Idee. Eine archäologische Untersuchung* (Heidelberg, 1995).

1. THE GENERAL PICTURE

When all types that are divided into the representational category '*saeculum aureum*' are quantified per reign, the below figure appears (see figure 27). As is visible in the chart, the percentages listed for Diadumenian and Saloninus are both 100%, which is remarkably high and can probably be explained by the fact that Diadumenian and Saloninus issued only one and two coin types, respectively (all of which refer to *saeculum aureum*). Still, one might argue that the propagation of a *saeculum aureum* on all coin types issued by Macrinus' son Diadumenian and Galienus' son Saloninus might have some connection with dynastic stability; the continuation of a dynasty implied success and prosperity.

An extraordinarily high number of 34 out of 35 third-century emperors referred to immaterial benefits on their coins.⁷ Since this type of messages also appears on coins of short-lived emperors, with Herennius Etruscus as the only exception, it seems that it was considered essential to emphasize the prosperous state of the Empire as soon as imperial power was gained or the position of Augustus had been reached. Furthermore, the mean percentage of coin types propagating *saeculum aureum* is extremely high; it lies at 24.9%, whereas the mean percentages for the other three large representational categories, military representation, divine association and virtues, lie at 18.3%, 15.8% and 19% respectively. The combination of the fact that even the coins of nearly all short-lived emperors featured references to *saeculum aureum* and this high mean of coin types propagating a golden age could indicate the paramount importance of communicating the success and prosperous state of the Empire in the third century. Yet, this might also hint at standardization of this type of imperial representation; the propagation of a golden age would then have become a fixed part of imperial ideology. At any rate, by means of mapping the numbers of *saeculum aureum* coin types minted in the period 193–284, Amits observation regarding the expansion of imperial propaganda emphasizing success and euphoria in the third century is provided with the necessary quantitative base.

The diachronic trends in the propagation of a *saeculum aureum* over the course of the third century can be described as follows. Percentages

⁷ In comparison with the other three large categories, more emperors referred to *saeculum aureum* on their coins. After all, four emperors did not associate themselves with the divine on their coins, whereas military representation and references to virtues were absent from the coins of three emperors.

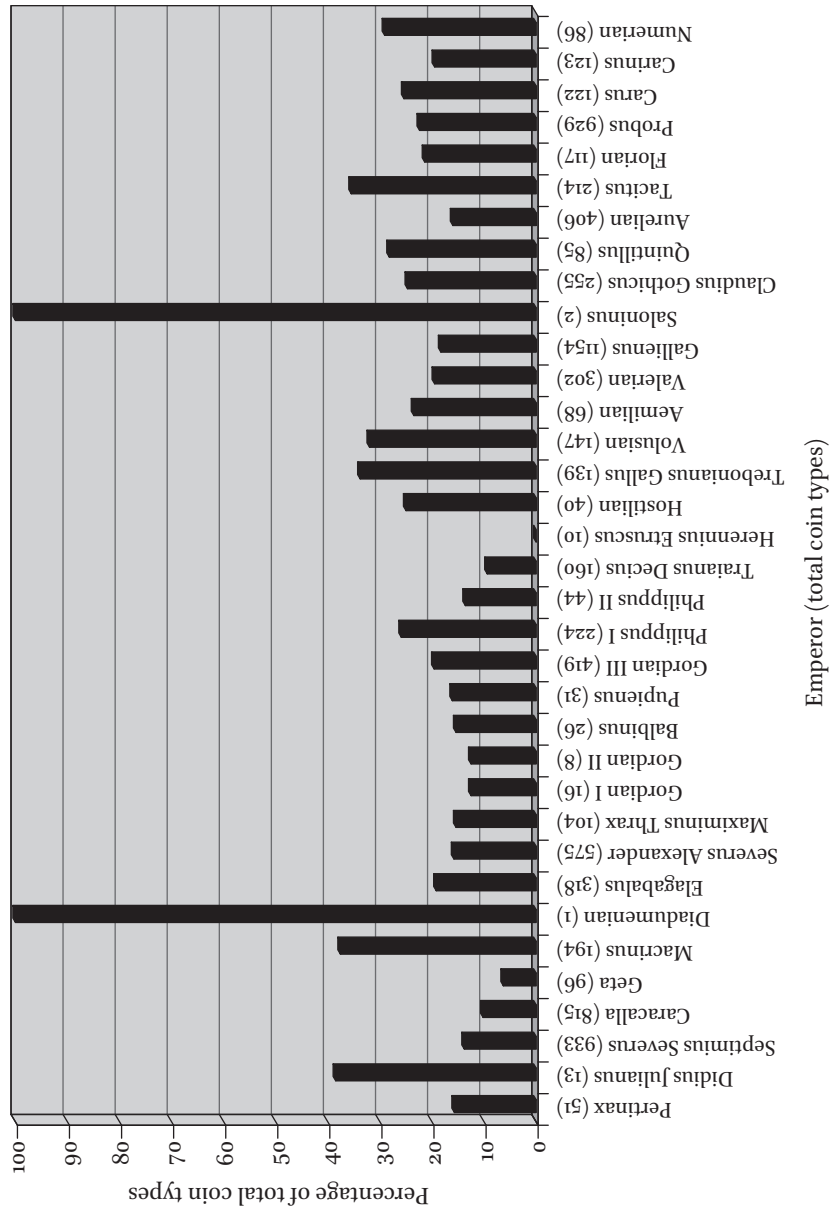


Figure 27 Proportions of coin types propagating 'saeculum aureum' per emperor

fluctuate most heavily in the period 193–218 (Pertinax to Macrinus) and 244–276 (Philippus I to Tacitus). As to peaks in this type of representation – excepting Diadumenian and Saloninus – the high percentages of coin types propagating *saeculum aureum* issued by the short-lived emperors Didius Julianus (38.5%) and Macrinus (37.6%) are the most striking, especially in view of the relatively low percentages from two emperors who reigned for a longer period of time, Septimius Severus (13.8%) and Caracalla (10.2%).⁸ The high percentages recorded for Didius Julianus and Macrinus seems to confirm the observation that was already made above on the basis of the fact that nearly all short-lived emperors propagated a golden age on their coins: apparently it was considered important to issue (a high number of) *saeculum aureum* types immediately at the beginning of a new reign.⁹ The high percentage listed for Tacitus (35.5%) strengthens this suggestion. The relatively low percentages of coin types communicating prosperity that are given for Septimius Severus (13.8%) and Caracalla (10.2%) might even point to the possibility that these particular types lost their usefulness the longer an emperor remained in office. Yet, the latter is contradicted by the percentages of *saeculum aureum* types issued by other emperors who possessed the imperial purple for a longer period of time: Gordian III (19.6%), Valerian (19.5%), Gallienus (18.3%) and Probus (22.4%).¹⁰

Be that as it may, a comparison between the mean percentage of the first half of the third century (Pertinax to Philippus Arabs), which is 22.8%, and that of the second half of the century (Decius to Numerian), which is 26.9%, seems to suggest that the influence of standardization on the third-century propagation of *saeculum aureum* should not be exaggerated; the numerical difference between the periods seems to suggest that there was a correlation between the increase of problems within the third-century Empire and the numbers of *saeculum aureum* types that were issued.¹¹ After all, the number of coin types propagating success and

⁸ The percentage listed for Geta is also low (6.3%). However, he was Augustus for ca. two years (see Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle*, p. 166).

⁹ The same can be said of the percentages of Diadumenian (100%) and Saloninus (100%). However, as mentioned above, they only issued one and two coin types.

¹⁰ Gordian III reigned for ca. six years, Valerian for ca. seven years, Gallienus for ca. fifteen years and Probus was emperor for ca. six years.

¹¹ Percentages for the first half of the third century (Pertinax to Philippus II): Pertinax: 15.7%; Didius Julianus: 38.5%; Septimius Severus: 13.8%; Caracalla: 10.2%; Geta: 6.3%; Macrinus: 37.6%; Diadumenian: 100%; Elagabalus: 19.2%; Severus Alexander: 15.8%; Maximinus Thrax: 15.4%; Gordian I: 12.5%; Gordian II: 12.5%; Balbinus: 15.4%; Pupienus: 16.1%; Gordian III: 19.6%; Philippus I: 25.9%; Philippus II: 13.6%. Percentages for the second half

prosperity increased in the period when the problems which the Empire faced culminated, namely in the second half of the third century.¹²

2. THE CORE BENEFITS

In the period 193–284, some beneficial features of an emperor's reign were emphasized more than others. Four aspects of prosperity were employed by more than twenty third-century emperors on their coins and can therefore be considered 'the core benefits';¹³ *felicitas* was put on the coins of 27 rulers, *pax* on the coins of 26 emperors, *securitas* was propagated during 23 reigns and *salus* during 21 emperorships.¹⁴ Obviously, representations of these four benefits on imperial coins were not newly introduced in the period 193–284; these forms of numismatic propaganda were already deployed earlier. References to *pax* initially appeared on the coins of Caesar and to *salus* on Tiberius' coinage, whereas *securitas* and *felicitas* were emphasized on coins from Nero and Galba onward. In the third century, however, the extent to which these four aspects of prosperity were emphasized and, especially regarding *pax*, *securitas* and *salus*, the variety of the references to these benefits changed.¹⁵

of the third century (Decius to Numerian): Decius: 9.4%; Herennius Etruscus: 0%; Hostilian: 25%; Trebonianus Gallus: 33.8%; Volusian: 32%; Aemilian: 23.5%; Valerian: 19.5%; Gallienus: 18.3%; Saloninus: 100%; Claudius Gothicus: 24.7%; Quintillus: 28.2%; Aurelian: 16%; Tacitus: 35.5%; Florian: 21.4%; Probus: 22.4%; Carus: 25.4%; Carinus: 19.5%; Numerian: 29.1%.

¹² Thus, this goes even further than Amit's observation that more *saeculum aureum* types were issued at the time when the Empire faced its most severe crisis (namely during the third century as a whole), see above, p. 187.

¹³ Twenty-five third-century emperors also refer to *concordia* and 22 to *fides* on their coins. The majority of the coin types referring to these two benefits, however, have a military connotation (CONCORDIA MILITVM/EXERCITVS (sometimes EXERCITI)/EQVIT/LEGIONVM and FIDES EXERCITVS (sometimes EXERCITI)/MILITVM/LEGIONVM/EQVITVM/PRAET) and are discussed in chapter two. Therefore, coin types referring to *concordia* and *fides* are not extensively discussed here.

¹⁴ Coin types that belong to other representational categories than '*saeculum aureum*' are also counted in here. Other benefits received less attention on third-century imperial coins; *abundantia*: ten emperors; *fortuna*: 18 emperors; *laetitia*: 15 emperors; *libertas*: 14 emperors; *spes*: 17 emperors; *uberitas*: ten emperors; SAECVLVM NOVVM: five emperors; MILIARVM SAECVLVM: one emperor; SAECVLVM FRVGIFERVM: two emperors; BONVS EVENTVS: five emperors; TELLVS STABILITAS: one emperor; *oriens*: eight emperors.

¹⁵ See Amit, "Propagande de succès et d'euphorie dans l'empire romain".

2.1 *Felicitas*

The first temple that was dedicated to the deified abstraction *Felicitas* was built by L. Licinius Lucullus in the Velabrum around 146 B.C. after the war that he had fought in Spain.¹⁶ During the Roman Republic, *felicitas*, 'happiness', had in first instance a military connotation; the concept was mainly used in combination with *summi viri* and *magni imperatores* and referred to successes on the battlefield.¹⁷ During the Empire, however, *felicitas* came to signify more generally the blessings brought about by the ruler, which, obviously, also encompassed military success.¹⁸

References to *felicitas* appeared for the first time on the coins of Galba, and thereafter on Vespasian's and Titus' coinage, probably reflecting the longing for peace after the devastating civil wars.¹⁹ The concept was also much-used on coins of later emperors, but, as Wistrand observed, some rulers chose to emphasize *felicitas* more than others. The extent to which the different third-century emperors referred to a state of happiness on their coins, as visualized in figure 28, confirms the latter.

When looking at the below graph, the high percentages for Diadumenian and Saloninus stand out. As mentioned above, both short-lived Augusti issued only one and two coins in total respectively, which puts these emperors' peaks regarding the representation of *felicitas* in another perspective. Yet, it remains noteworthy that it was precisely a general state of happiness which was referred to on the sparse coins of Diadumenian and Saloninus; apparently, both emperors considered it important to communicate this message in the first place. Whereas Diadumenian's coin type propagates FELICITAS TEMPORVM, referring to the happiness of the time, Saloninus' type bears the legend FELICITAS AVGVSTORVM, thereby actively connecting the emperors Gallienus and Saloninus to a blissful state.²⁰ As will become clear below, the concept *felicitas* could also be used in a dynastic context. Therefore, the *felicitas* coins of Macrinus' and Gallienus' sons might display *felicitas* as a consequence of dynastic continuity.

¹⁶ Erckell, *Augustus, felicitas, fortuna*, p. 71.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 128; Wistrand, *Felicitas imperatoria*, p. 66.

¹⁸ Wistrand, *Felicitas imperatoria*, p. 66; Jones, *A Dictionary of Ancient Roman Coins*, p. 113. On *felicitas* in general see also L. Zieske, *Felicitas: Eine Wortuntersuchung* (Hamburg, 1972) and on the use of *felicitas* from the Late Republic to Trajan, see T.G. Harber, *Felicitas in Roman Politics: the Triumviral Period to Trajan* (Diss. Sydney, 2009).

¹⁹ Wistrand, *Felicitas imperatoria*, p. 65.

²⁰ RIC IV.2, Diadumenianus, no. 118; RIC V.1, Saloninus, no. 1.

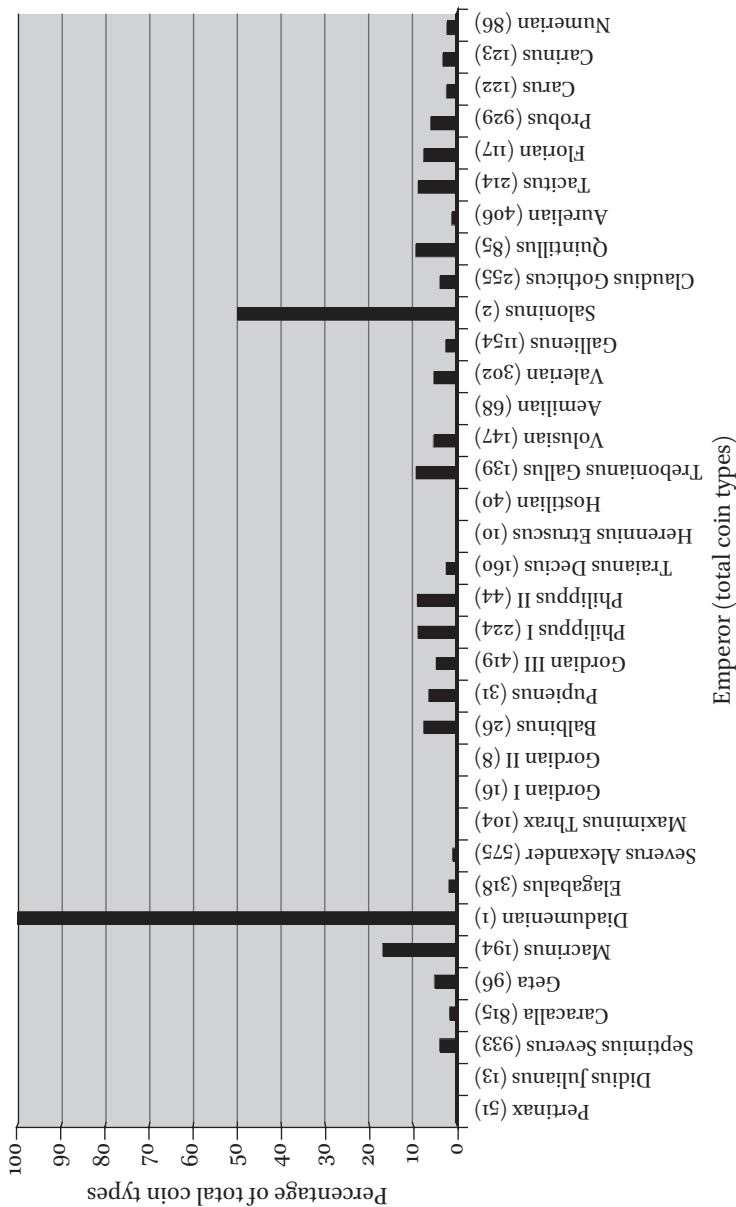


Figure 28 Proportions of coin types propagating *felicitas* per emperor

Looking at the general trend of the representation of *felicitas* on third-century coins, it is obvious that it was a commonly used theme; only eight out of 35 emperors did not refer to happiness on their coins. Moreover, from the reign of Valerian onward, every emperor deployed this type of propaganda. Yet, the extent to which references to *felicitas* appear on third-century coins fluctuates heavily throughout the century. The percentages rendered for nearly all reigns fluctuate between 0 and 10 %. Only Macrinus, apart from Diadumenian and Saloninus, forms an exception; more than 17% of his coin types bear references to *felicitas*. After the (temporary) collapse of the Severan dynasty, this large number of *felicitas* types might reflect attempts by Macrinus to create his own line of succession.²¹ If so, Macrinus' *felicitas* types, all of which display *Felicitas* holding either *caduceus* and *cornucopiae*, or scepter and *cornucopiae* or *caduceus* and scepter, could also be understood as referring to dynastic continuity.

In the third century, references to *felicitas* on coins were made through a variety of legends. Legends in which *felicitas* is directly combined with the emperor occur often in the period 193–284. FELICITAS AVG(VSTI) and FELICITAS AVGG/AVGVSTORVM are inscribed on the coins of Septimius Severus, Caracalla, Elagabalus, Severus Alexander, Gordian III, Volusian, Valerian, Gallienus, Saloninus, Claudius Gothicus, Quintillus, Florian, Tacitus, Probus, and Numerian, whereas FELICITAS IMPP appears on coins of Philippus I and II.²² Amit argued that such coin types have to be understood in the Republican sense. That means that, according to him, they refer to 'l'ensemble de qualités de caractère, la science militaire et la sagesse [of the emperor] qui assurent la victoire dans les guerres que l'Empire doit mener pour continuer d'exister'.²³ Some of the third-century

²¹ On the Severans' propagation of *felicitas*, see Z. Rubin, "The *felicitas* and the *concordia* of the Severan house", *SCI* 3 (1976/77), pp. 153–172.

²² FELICITAS AVG(VSTI): *RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, no. 187A; *RIC* IV.2, Severus Alexander, nos. 137, 192; *RIC* IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 310a), 310b), 310c); *RIC* IV.3, Volusianus, no. 216; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 31, 32, 186, 197, 188, 189, 190, 191, 350, 474, 542, 565, 566; *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 4, 32, 33, 206; *RIC* V.1, Quintillus, no. 17; *RIC* V.1, Florianus, nos. 60, 61, 98, 99; *RIC* V.1, Tacitus, nos. 135, 136; *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 355, 356, 357, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686. FELICITAS AVGG/AVGVSTORVM: *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, no. 261; *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 18, 34, 35, 127, 339, 348; *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, nos. 33, 34, 86, 87, 88, 157, 192, 193, 282, 283; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 1, 73, 134, 135, 136, 136a), 210, 211, 212, 254, 266; *RIC* V.1, Saloninus, no. 258; *RIC* V.2, Numerianus, nos. 384, 385. FELICITAS IMPP: *RIC* IV.3, Philippus I, nos. 60, 84; *RIC* IV.3, Philippus II, nos. 242, 247.

²³ Amit, "Propagande de succès et d'euphorie dans l'empire romain", p. 68.

types indeed have a military connotation; the types of Philippus I and II that bear the legend FELICITAS IMPPP show a laurel wreath, symbol of victory, one of Valerian's types with the legend FELICITAS AVGG/AVGVSTORVM is combined with with an image of Valerian, Gallienus and Valerian Iunior in a triumphal car accompanied by soldiers, and a coin type of Gallienus that refers to *felicitas Augusti* displays an image of a galley.²⁴ The majority of third-century coin types linking the concept *felicitas* directly to the emperor, however, bear no militarily tinged images but display Felicitas holding either her usual attributes, *caduceus*, *cornucopiae*, or others such as *patera*, rudder, scepter and globe. This could imply that these types do not have a military connotation; it is more likely, since the imagery on these types points to a broader significance of the legend *felicitas Augusti/Augustorum*, that they propagate 'Kaiserglück' in general, which provided a state of peace and prosperity within the Empire.²⁵

Another group of coins with *felicitas* messages that were deployed by many emperors in the period 193–284 encompass types propagating the happiness of a particular period; they refer either to *saeculi felicitas* or to *temporum felicitas* (image 17). These particular types emerged within three periods within the third century. The first period includes the reigns of Septimius Severus, Caracalla, Macrinus, Diadumenian, Elagabalus and Severus Alexander.²⁶ Gordian III, Philippus I and Decius represent the second period, and the third period in which *saeculi felicitas* or *temporum felicitas* emerged on coins includes the reigns of Valerian, Gallienus, Claudius Gothicus, Quintillus, Aurelian, Tacitus, Florian, Probus and Carinus.²⁷

²⁴ RIC IV.3, Philippus I, nos. 60, 84; RIC IV.3, Philippus II, nos. 242, 247; RIC V.1, Valerianus, no. 156; RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 32.

²⁵ Erckell, *Augustus, felicitas, fortuna*, p. 128.

²⁶ *Saeculi felicitas*: RIC IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 159, 175, 181a)–181c), 263, 293B, 327, 360, 416–418B, 513, 692a), 692b), 698, 710, 711, 815, 823, 827; RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 25A, 128, 469, 470; RIC IV.2, Severus Alexander, no. 299. *Temporum felicitas*: RIC IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 353, 354, 372–376; RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 126, 153, 233A; RIC IV.2, Macrinus, nos. 57–63, 172–178; RIC IV.2, Diadumenianus, no. 118; RIC IV.2, Elagabalus, nos. 148–150, 188, 201; RIC IV.2, Severus Alexander, nos. 179, 277.

²⁷ *Saeculi felicitas*: RIC IV.3, Gordianus III, no. 216; RIC IV.3, Trajan Decius, nos. 115a)–115e). *Temporum felicitas*: RIC IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 140–142, 157–159, 167, 328a), 328c)–330; RIC IV.3, Philippus I, nos. 31, 87, 169a), 169b). *Saeculi felicitas*: RIC V.1, Valerianus, nos. 159, 213, 249; RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 74, 291, 396; RIC V.1, Claudius Gothicus, no. 179; RIC V.1, Quintillus, nos. 30, 39; RIC V.1, Aurelianus, nos. 121–123, 352; RIC V.1, Tacitus, nos. 21–24, 138, 139, 184; RIC V.1, Florianus, nos. 62, 100; RIC V.2, Probus, nos. 358–362, 687–690; RIC V.2, Carinus, nos. 214, 215. *Temporum felicitas*: RIC V.1, Valerianus, no. 259; RIC V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 31, 145–147, 192; RIC V.1, Quintillus, nos. 4, 74–77; RIC V.1, Aurelianus, no. 327; RIC V.1, Tacitus, nos. 6, 7, 18, 19, 63–65, 140; RIC V.1, Florianus, nos. 11, 12, 63; RIC V.2, Probus, nos. 9, 24–26, 51–53, 73–77, 79–81, 102, 109, 117, 129, 130, 262–264, 539, 598.



Image 17 *Temporum felicitas* (RIC V.2, Probus, no. 104)

This message was thus propagated in all phases of the period which usually is described as anything but happy. Some of these particular *felicitas* types have a clear military connotation by portraying the emperor or Felicitas with a military attribute, the prow of a ship or a laurel-wreath. Others emphasize the dynastic aspect of *felicitas* by displaying imperial successors, other family members or the four seasons represented as children at play. Finally, happiness could also be propagated as a consequence of the emperor's generosity through images of *liberalitas* scenes. The remaining types that refer to *saeculi felicitas* or *temporum felicitas* bear no images by which the *felicitas* message is placed in a specific military, dynastic or euergetic context, they display 'neutral' images of *felicitas*, that means portraits of Felicitas with her usual attributes, or other general references to happiness such as a basket with fruits.

A third group of *felicitas* coins communicates the happiness of all inhabitants within the empire by referring to *imperii felicitas*, *felicitas publica* or *felicitas rei publicae*.²⁸ The coins propagating *felicitas publica* and *felicitas reipublicae* display an image of Felicitas holding either *caduceus*

Two types of Gallienus, propagating FELICI(T) AET (RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 185, 564) and therefore divided into the representational category 'aeternitas messages', also bear a reference to happiness in combination with an adjunct of time, namely eternity.

²⁸ *Imperii felicitas*: RIC IV.1, Septimius Severus, no. 98; RIC IV.1, Caracalla, no. 331. *Felicitas publica*: RIC IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 262, 331; RIC IV.3, Gordianus III, no. 128; RIC IV.3, Trebonianus Gallus, nos. 8, 27, 28, 29, 33, 34, 34A, 59, 75, 82, 107, 108a), 108b); RIC IV.3, Volusianus, nos. 147, 165, 188A, 205, 217, 251a), 251b); RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 192; RIC V.1, Tacitus, nos. 20, 137; RIC V.2, Carus, no. 54; RIC V.2, Carinus, nos. 292, 295. *Felicitas reipublicae*: RIC V.2, Carus, nos. 99, 101. Severus' coin type belongs to the representational category 'dynastic representation, whereas Carus' coins, referring to *felicitas reipublicae*, are divided into the representational category 'unica'.

and scepter, or *caduceus* and *cornucopiae*, or solely a *caduceus*. Yet, Septimius Severus' coin type with the legend IMPERII FELICITAS shows the busts of Septimius Severus and his son Geta, whereas Caracalla's type with the same legend bears an image of Felicitas with a *caduceus* and holding a child on her arm. Considering these images and the fact that Caracalla's type was minted shortly after he was elevated to the rank of Augustus in 197, it is obvious that these two Severan types communicate a specific type of happiness, namely a blissful state that resulted from the guarantee of imperial succession. In addition, Gordian's coin type propagating *felicitas publica* was minted on the occasion of the wedding between the emperor and Sabinia Tranquillina in 241, which places the type also in a dynastic context.

Apart from these three large groups of *felicitas* types, other coins referring to happiness were minted in the period 193–284. Most of them display an image of Felicitas in combination with a legend consisting of the emperor's titulature.²⁹ In some cases Felicitas' attributes give us an indication how to interpret the message precisely; two types of Septimius Severus portray Felicitas holding her foot on a prow, the symbol of naval victory, thereby referring to military success.³⁰ Out of the remaining *felicitas* types, coins bearing the legend FELICITAS EXERCITI, issued under Valerian, and FELICIT DEORVM, struck on the authority of Gallienus during the joint reign with his father, are the most conspicuous.³¹ Valerian's type might also be interpreted in the Republican sense, namely as a reference to military victory.³² However, when we consider the fact that

²⁹ RIC IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 701, 712; RIC IV.1, Geta, nos. 69a), 69b), 78a), 78b), 80; RIC IV.2, Macrinus, nos. 4, 20, 21, 31, 32, 40, 41, 42, 121, 122, 139, 140, 149, 150, 155, 156; RIC IV.2, Severus Alexander, no. 422; RIC IV.2, Balbinus, nos. 6, 18; RIC IV.2, Pupienus, nos. 6, 16; RIC IV.3, Philippus I, 3, 4, 5, 6, 75, 75Aa), 149a), 149b), 150a), 150b), 150c), 153a), 153b), 153c); RIC IV.3, Philippus II, nos. 232, 233, 235. Two coin types of Septimius Severus (nos. 701 and 712), referring to the emperor as son of *divus* Marcus Aurelius, are divided into the representational category 'dynastic representation', whereas one coin type of Severus Alexander, displaying Felicitas with Palladium (no. 422) belongs to the representational category 'unica'. Other coin types refer through their legends to *vota publica* (RIC IV.2, Macrinus, nos. 6, 7, 127; representational category: divine association), *securitas perpetua* (RIC IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 335a), 335b), 335c), 336; representational category: *aeternitas* messages) and *fides militum* (RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 475; representational category: military representation), while bearing an image of Felicitas.

³⁰ RIC IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 701 and 712.

³¹ RIC V.1, Valerianus, no. 158; RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 133. Valerian's coin type is divided into the representational category 'military representation, whereas Gallienus' type belongs to 'divine association'.

³² See Erkell 1952, p. 126 on a *denarius* of Julia Mamaeaea which bears the legend FELICITAS EXERCITI (RIC IV.2, Severus Alexander, no. 367A). See also p. 91.

the variety of numismatic references to the armed forces increased from the rule of Valerian onward, as has been argued in chapter two, this coin probably reflects the growing importance and power of the troops, thus not necessarily pointing to successful military activities. Gallienus' coin type with the legend FELICIT DEORVM represents *felicitas* as a gift from the gods.³³

The *felicitas* coin types issued in the period 193–284 thus confirm that, at least for this period, the concept *felicitas* cannot be understood in the narrow Republican sense, namely solely as referring to military success. They emphasize the blessings brought about by the emperor; sometimes they refer to such a blissful state in general, sometimes the coins' imagery suggests that *felicitas* should be interpreted as the result of dynastic continuity, imperial *liberalitas* or military victory.

2.2 Pax

In the Roman world, peace was considered a result of successful warfare.³⁴ Augustus' famous *Ara Pacis* illustrates this conceptual association of war and peace. The first *princeps'* altar of peace was built on the Campus Martius, an area within Rome charged with military significance. Some of the altar's panels and friezes show militarily steeped images, such as for instance Roma surrounded by armor and weaponry and flanked by Virtus, figures wearing military garbs or a laurel wreath as well as Mars, the war god, overseeing Romulus and Remus.³⁵ Another example forms the temple of the deified Hadrian (Hadrianeum) in Rome. On the Hadrianeum, peaceful personifications of the Empire's provinces are separated by depictions of captured weapons and armor.³⁶

³³ Erckell, *Augustus, felicitas, fortuna*, p. 126. Coin types bearing a *felicitas* legend and displaying the image of a particular deity might also communicate the message that happiness was a gift of the deity in question. Diana: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 74, 291. Possibly Saturn: *RIC* V.2, Probus, no. 598.

³⁴ J. Blair DeBrohun, "The gates of war (and peace): Roman literary perspectives", in: K. Raafaub ed., *War and Peace in the Ancient World* (Oxford, 2007), pp. 256–278; p. 274. On the connection between war and peace, see also L. Hardwick, "Concepts of peace", in: J. Huskinson ed., *Experiencing Rome. Culture, Identity and Power in the Roman Empire* (London, 2000), pp. 335–368.

³⁵ The literature is immense; for a description of the *Ara Pacis'* panels and friezes, see most recently P. Rehak, *Imperium and Cosmos. Augustus and the Northern Campus Martius* (Madison and London, 2007), pp. 96–137 (with references to earlier literature).

³⁶ *LTUR* 3, pp. 7–8.

The ideological link between war and peace is also visible on coins. The clearest examples are coins displaying Mars Pacifer or Mars Pacator. On these coins, the war god is represented as the bringer and the guardian of peace. As seen earlier in chapter three, Mars appears frequently in these capacities on third-century imperial coinage. Mars Pacator is represented on types issued by Septimius Severus, Caracalla and possibly Quintillus, while Mars Pacifer appears on types of 15 third-century emperors.³⁷

The significance attached to peace, a state of quiet and tranquillity that was the result of the end of war, is reflected by the fact that Pax was considered an important deity from the end of the Republic onward.³⁸ The propagation of Pax for political purposes dates back to Sulla, whereas the cult of Pax received much attention under Caesar, Augustus, who had built the *Ara Pacis*, and his immediate successors.³⁹ After all, according to Seneca peace depended on the ruler; in his *De Clementia* he connects Roman peace with *imperium*.⁴⁰

Pax was propagated on a large scale in the third century (see figure 29); the extent to which this particular benefit appeared on imperial coins was unparalleled (*image 18*). Only nine emperors (Pertinax, Didius Julianus, Geta, Macrinus, Diadumenian, Gordian I and Gordian II, Herennius Etruscus and Saloninus) did not publicize peace on their coins. Many *pax* coins issued in the period 193–284, however, could not have a link with reality since peace formed an exceptional condition in this time span. Therefore, they probably reflect imperial promises of *pax*.

Although many emperors propagated *pax*, the proportion of such types differed for each reign which explains the heavy fluctuations in the percentages.⁴¹ The propagation of *pax* peaked during the reign of

³⁷ Mars Pacator: *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 33, 45; *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 222; possibly *RIC* V.1, Quintillus, no. 58. Mars Pacifer: *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 113, 133A, 741; *RIC* IV.2, Severus Alexander, nos. 159–161, 289, 585; *RIC* IV.2, Maximinus Thrax, nos. 11, 55–57; *RIC* IV.3, Gordianus III, no. 212; *RIC* IV.3, Trebonianus Gallus, nos. 40, 85; *RIC* IV.3, Aemilianus, nos. 5a), 5b), 15; *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, nos. 169, 244, 272; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 225; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 56, 112, 236, 353, 370, 422, 492; *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 7, 68–73, 128, 129, 175; *RIC* V.1, Quintillus, nos. 24, 25, 58, 59; *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, nos. 33, 34, 112, 133, 270, 271; *RIC* V.1, Tacitus, nos. 32, 145; *RIC* V.1, Florianus, no. 72; *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 40–43, 177, 470–472, 505–513, 540–544, 699, *RIC* V.2, Numerianus, no. 402. See also above, p. 119 n. 113.

³⁸ Amit, “Propagande de succès et d’euphorie dans l’empire romain”, p. 55.

³⁹ See for instance Woolf, “Roman peace”, p. 171.

⁴⁰ Seneca, *De Clementia* 1.4; Hardwick, “Concepts of peace”, p. 346.

⁴¹ Woolf labels *Pax Romana* as an ideological construct that mainly served the interests of the Roman emperors. According to him, ‘ideology also had its disadvantages: emperors and their advisors, those to whom *pax Romana* must have been most real, may well



Image 18 *Pax* (RIC IV.1, Septimius Severus, no. 37)

Philippus II and, to a lesser extent, during the reigns of Tacitus and Carus. The percentages listed for emperors who reigned for a longer period of time (e.g. Septimius Severus, Caracalla, Severus Alexander, Gordian III, Valerian, Gallienus, Aurelian, Probus) are relatively low (all under five percent). Because many *pax* coins cannot be explained otherwise than referring to imperial promises, the low percentages listed for these emperors might reflect the fact that they had not been able to fulfil the promise of peace or that peace promises were mainly made at the beginning of a reign.

Among the coin types that refer to peace in their legends, *pax* is most often directly connected with the emperor through the legends PAX AVG/AVGG.⁴² PAX AVG could be understood in two ways, namely as PAX

have been lulled into a false sense of security by it, and the dramatic falsification of their claims in the third century caused a crisis in legitimacy that almost proved fatal' (G. Woolf, "Roman peace", in: J. Rich and G. Shipley (eds.), *War and Society in the Roman World* (London and New York, 1993) pp. 171–194; p. 190). I doubt, however, whether third-century emperors were 'lulled into a false sense of security' since they had to cope with so many difficulties. Moreover, the third-century crisis in legitimacy could not only be ascribed to the fact that peace claims were falsified.

⁴² RIC IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 37, 54, 89; RIC IV.2, Elagabalus, nos. 125, 366–368; RIC IV.2, Severus Alexander, nos. 167, 168, 591, 592; RIC IV.2, Maximinus Thrax, nos. 12, 19, 58, 60, 81–83; RIC IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 3, 9, 62, 188–192, 214, 215, 256a)–256c); RIC IV.3, Trajan Decius, nos. 6, 27, 107a), 107b), 125a), 125b); RIC IV.3, Trebonianus Gallus, nos. 55, 56, 86, 87, 115a), 115b); RIC IV.3, Volusianus, nos. 157, 179–181, 207, 229–231c), 256a)–256c); RIC IV.3, Aemilianus, nos. 8, 19, 23, 37, 48, 60a), 60b); RIC V.1, Valerianus, nos. 14, 48, 108–111, 230, 245; RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 87, 88, 155–157, 190, 231, 232, 256, 274, 275, 389–392; RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 14, 63, 115, 147, 255–259, 390, 391, 409, 426–429, 499–503, 575–577; RIC V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 79–82, 156–158, 186; RIC V.1, Quintillus, nos. 26, 62; RIC V.1, Aurelianus, nos. 35, 51, 232, 398; RIC V.1, Tacitus, nos. 35–43, 71, 146–151, 186, 187;

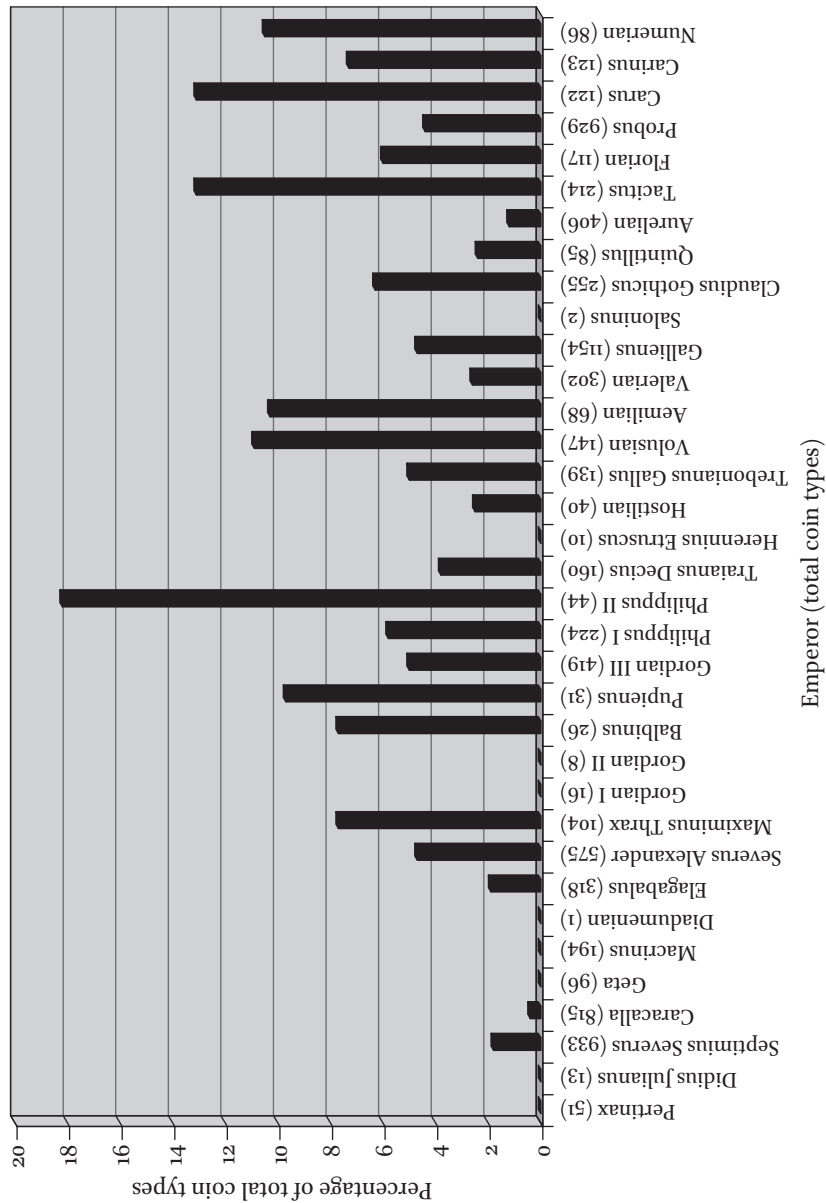


Figure 29 Proportions of coin types propagating *pax* per emperor

AVGVSTI or as PAX AVGVSTA. Since PAX AVGVSTI appears more frequently than PAX AVGVSTA on third-century *pax* coins without abbreviations – PAX AVGVSTA emerged solely on one coin type issued under Probus –, the legend PAX AVG should probably be considered propagating PAX AVGVSTI.⁴³ Nevertheless, *pax Augusti* and *pax Augusta* connote the same; they both refer to a state of peace guaranteed by the emperor.⁴⁴ The third-century coin types that bear the legends PAX AVG(G), PAX AVGVSTI and PAX AVGVSTA therefore seem to recall Seneca's conception of Roman peace as depending on the emperor.

Thereafter, references to eternal peace (*pax aeterna* or *pax perpetua*) appear on the coins of 15 emperors spread over the whole third century.⁴⁵ Apparently, at times when the *pax Romana*, and thus the Empire's unity, was threatened most, messages propagating eternal peace circulated on a large scale.⁴⁶ Coin types bearing the legend PAX PVBLICA and PAX EXERCITI were issued each by three emperors.⁴⁷ When we compare the propagation of *felicitas publica*, *securitas publica* and *salus publica* with the circulation of messages promoting *pax publica*, it is conspicuous that the slogan *pax publica* was used less often than the others. Might this, then, mean that the propagation of *pax* did sometimes have a link with actual circumstances within the Empire? After all, a state of peace for all inhabitants of the Empire had not been realized in the period 193–284, since in these years military activities or internal uprisings always took place somewhere within the Empire. The fact that only three third-century emperors communicated *pax publica* through their coins might thus reflect the precarious military situation in many regions of the

RIC V.1, Florianus, nos. 73–75, 102, 103; *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 90, 92, 118, 119, 178, 179, 393, 394, 473–475, 514–521, 545–549, 704–715; *RIC* V.2, Carus, nos. 2, 10–14, 60, 103, 104, 115; *RIC* V.2, Carinus, nos. 263, 273, 274, 276–278, 285–289; *RIC* V.2, Numerianus, nos. 391–395, 430, 431, 435, 440.

⁴³ PAX AVGVSTA: *RIC* V.2, Probus, no. 710.

⁴⁴ Amit, "Propagande de succès et d'euphorie dans l'empire romain", p. 57.

⁴⁵ *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 118, 118A, 283, 745; *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 138; *RIC* IV.2, Severus Alexander, nos. 164–166, 291, 590; *RIC* IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 319a)–319c); *RIC* IV.3, Philippus I, nos. 40a)–42, 184a)–185c); *RIC* IV.3, Philippus II, nos. 227, 231a)–231c), 268a)–268d); *RIC* IV.3, Trebonianus Gallus, no. 71; *RIC* IV.3, Volusianus, nos. 195, 211; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 252–254, 408; *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 185, 237–239; *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, no. 114; Tacitus, nos. 33, 34, 72, 73; *RIC* V.1, Florianus, nos. 51, 52; *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 7, 8; *RIC* V.2, Carus, nos. 31, 59.

⁴⁶ Amit, "Propagande de succès et d'euphorie dans l'empire romain", p. 58.

⁴⁷ PAX PVBLICA: *RIC* IV.2, Balbinus, nos. 4, 24; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 233; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 64, 260, 430; *RIC* V.1, Tacitus, nos. 2–5, 44, 45. PAX EXERCITI: *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 131, 159, 160, 176; *RIC* V.2, Carus, nos. 72–75; *RIC* V.2, Carinus, no. 301.

Empire. Another explanation is offered by Amit, who argues that, in the case of Balbinus, the legend *pax publica* mirrors internal peace; after all, Balbinus and Pupienus were appointed by the senate in order to replace the 'military tyrant' Maximinus Thrax.⁴⁸ Gallienus' *pax publica* coin type, minted during the joint reign of Valerian and Gallienus, would then point to dynastic continuity which also contributed to internal stability.⁴⁹

Coins referring to *pax exerciti* were issued under Claudius Gothicus, Carus and Carinus. They draw attention to the fact that, especially in the second half of the third century, the Empire was now dependent on the Roman armies for guaranteeing peace.⁵⁰ This does not mean that Seneca's conception of peace would not longer be applicable, for the emperor symbolized military power in this period in imperial history.

Gallienus and Probus issued coin types during their reigns which proclaimed VBIQVE PAX, pointing to a state of peace that was experienced everywhere.⁵¹ Since all of these VBIQVE PAX types display Victory in a *biga*, an exceptional image on *pax* coins (see below), they might refer to actual victories that these emperors gained. Unfortunately, the types are all undated which hampers connecting them with specific triumphs.

Coins bearing the legends PAX FVNDATA CVM PERSIS and PAX FVN-DATA were issued under Philippus Arabs and Gallienus respectively and refer to specific occasions.⁵² Both messages have a connection with the Persians. Whereas Philippus Arabs' undated coin types refer to a treaty with the Persians in 244, Gallienus' coin, also undated in the *RIC*, might have a link with Odaenathus' victories over the Persians, probably in 262–263 and 267.⁵³

The majority of the types that bear a legend referring to *pax* display an image of the personification Pax. There are, however, some exceptions. First, Gordian III issued three types with the legend PAX AVGVSTI and

⁴⁸ Amit, "Propagande de succès et d'euphorie dans l'empire romain", p. 58.

⁴⁹ A similar explanation for Tacitus' *pax publica* coins is difficult to give because of the scarce information about this emperor. Amit, furthermore, ignores coin types propagating *pax publica* which were also issued under Gallienus and Tacitus.

⁵⁰ Amit, "Propagande de succès et d'euphorie dans l'empire romain", p. 59. Amit argues that the *pax exerciti* coins thus point to a fundamental political change within the Empire. He seems to ignore, however, that this development did not start with Claudius Gothicus' rule but earlier.

⁵¹ *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 72–74, 121, 359–360; *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 139, 296.

⁵² PAX FVNDATA CVM PERSIS: *RIC* IV.3, Philippus I, nos. 69, 72. PAX FVNDATA: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 652.

⁵³ See Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle*, p. 198; De Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus*, p. 136. See also p. 292.

a depiction of a warrior or Virtus holding a branch and a spear.⁵⁴ Second, as already mentioned, all eight coin types with the legend VBIQVE PAX, issued by Gallienus and Probus, show an image of Victoria in a *biga*.⁵⁵ Third, Gallienus' coin type referring to PAX FVNDATA presents an image of two captives and a trophy.⁵⁶ Fourth, a coin type issued under Florian bears the legend PAX AETERNA and portrays an image of Sol.⁵⁷ As seen earlier, Sol was frequently depicted in combination with a reference to *aeternitas*; Sol was then used to proclaim *saeculum aureum*.⁵⁸

In addition to the coin types mentioning *pax* in the legend, some coin types referred to *pax* not in the legend but through the image. The majority of these types bear a legend consisting of standard imperial titulature and depict the personification Pax.⁵⁹ Two types struck under the reign of Gordian III present, apart from Pax, two additional figures: Gordian receives a branch from Pax and is crowned by Victoria.⁶⁰

The coin types bearing the legend PAX EXERCITI and PAX FVNDATA CVM PERSIS, as well as the types that show images of a warrior/Virtus, Victoria or captives with a trophy, explicitly link peace to military matters on the same reverse. Yet, considering the Roman conception of peace as a product of successful warfare, *pax* coins with no explicit martial references also have a military connotation. The unprecedented number of *pax* coin types issued in the third century as well as the exceptional variation of *pax* legends might therefore have a connection with the numerous military activities that took place in the period 193–284.

2.3 *Securitas*

In Roman literary sources, the concept *securitas* was used in a philosophical, juridical and political context; it could relate to peace of mind, a pledge or note of remittance, or to political stability.⁶¹ Regarding the

⁵⁴ RIC IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 190–192.

⁵⁵ RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 72–74, 121, 359–360; RIC V.2, Probus, nos. 139, 296.

⁵⁶ RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 652.

⁵⁷ RIC V.1, Florianus, no. 52.

⁵⁸ See above, p. 129.

⁵⁹ RIC IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 85, 88a), 88b), 235, 490a), 490b), 724, 727, 739a), 739b); RIC IV.2, Elagabalus, nos. 21, 29; RIC IV.2, Severus Alexander, nos. 26, 27, 38–40, 66, 67, 79, 80, 402, 403, 417, 418, 445, 465, 466, 479, 480; RIC IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 17, 22.

⁶⁰ RIC IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 50C, 175.

⁶¹ On *securitas* as peace of mind, see for example Seneca, *Epistulae* 92.3; on *securitas* as a pledge or note of remittance, see for instance Livy 40.15.16; on *securitas* as political

term's latter connotation, *securitas* was seen as connected to *pax*, it was one of the ways in which peace expressed itself.⁶² From the first century onward, *securitas* became a popular slogan, which was frequently used on imperial coins.⁶³ Yet, according to Instinsky, the propagation of security, used in a political context, hinted in the first place at disturbances of the political order.⁶⁴ In this light, it would not be surprising that 23 emperors in the period between 193 and 284 produced coin types bearing references to *securitas*.

When we look at figure 30, however, the diachronic development of the numerical extent to which third-century emperors referred to *securitas* on their coins seems to be characterized by a slightly downward movement.⁶⁵ A comparison between the mean calculated for the period Pertinax – Philippus II, which is 3.5%, and the mean calculated for the period Decius-Numerian, which is 2.1%, confirms this image. On the other hand, from the reign of Decius onward only five out of 18 emperors did *not* issue coins propagating *securitas*, whereas before the reign of Decius, seven out of 17 emperors refrained from putting references to *securitas* on their coins. As already mentioned, Instinsky has observed that the use of the concept *securitas* reflected disturbances of the political order; whereas the overall picture, presenting a slight decrease in the number of *securitas* types issued during the third century, does not necessarily cohere to this notion, the increasing number of emperors who propagated *securitas* on their coins does.

Nevertheless, it is striking that *securitas* appears on the coins of many short-lived emperors; Didius Julianus, Macrinus, Gordian I, Gordian II, Hostilian, Quintillus, Tacitus, Florian, and Numerian all issued coins referring to security.⁶⁶ The fact that many short-lived emperors put *securitas*

stability see among others Velleius Paterculus 2.103.3f. A. Schrimm-Heins, "Gewissheit und Sicherheit. Geschichte und Bedeutungswandel der Begriffe *certitudo* und *securitas*", *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte* 34 (1991), pp. 123–213; pp. 133–140.

⁶² Amit, "Propagande de succès et d'euphorie dans l'empire romain", p. 60; Schrimm-Heins, "Gewissheit und Sicherheit", p. 137.

⁶³ See for instance the *securitas* coins that were sent to Lower and Upper Germany in the year 71, see Kemmers, *Coins for a Legion*, pp. 223–242; see above, p. 37.

⁶⁴ Instinsky, *Sicherheit als politisches Problem des römischen Kaisertums*, p. 20.

⁶⁵ Yet, the peaks that appear for Didius Julianus, Gordian I, and Gordian II might be somewhat misleading since the total number of coin types that are listed in the *RIC* for these emperors are respectively thirteen, sixteen and eight.

⁶⁶ Didius Julianus: March–June 193; Macrinus: 217–218; Gordian I and II: January? 238; Hostilian: June–July? 251; Quintillus: September 270; Tacitus: end 275–medio 276; Florian: medio-autumn 276; Numerian: 283–284. See Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle*, pp. 154–260.

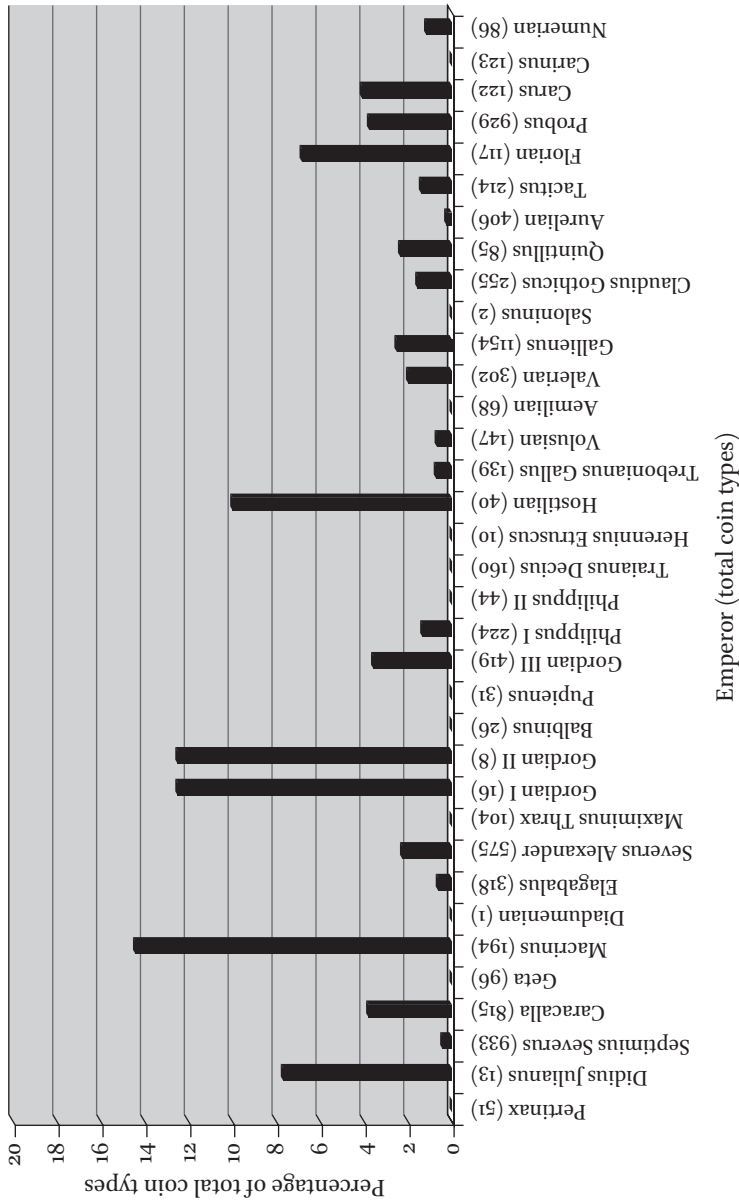


Figure 30 Proportions of coin types propagating *securitas* per emperor



Image 19 *Securitas* (RIC V.1, Quintillus, no. 31)

on their coins could indicate that there was indeed a connection between the minting of this type of coins and actual historical events or, more specifically, between the propagation of *securitas* and disturbances of the political order in the third century. After all, many of these rulers found themselves in a situation in which the normal political order was completely turned upside down, as for example the events that took place in the year 238, in which both Gordiani reigned, demonstrate.⁶⁷ Another option could be the possibility that, as in the case of *pax*, the propagation of *securitas* mirrored imperial promises of security. It could also be that it was considered important to publicize *securitas* directly after the status of Augustus had been reached in order to legitimize the emperor's newly achieved position as soon as possible. Would this be the case, then a link between the minting of this type of coins and actual historical events in the third century not necessarily existed.

The peaks that are visible for Macrinus and Hostilian are conspicuous. Regarding Macrinus, 28 out of 194 coin types bear a reference to security, whereas four out of 40 coin types issued under Hostilian communicate this type of propaganda. The high number of *securitas* types struck under Macrinus could mirror attempts to legitimize his position as the first equestrian emperor by presenting a symbol of political stability. Hostilian might have wanted to emphasize dynastic continuity after the deaths of his father Traianus Decius and his brother Herennius Etruscus.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ On the events that took place in the year 238, see K. Haegemans, *Imperial authority and dissent: the Roman Empire in AD 235–238* (Leuven, 2010).

⁶⁸ Instinsky links the issuance of *securitas* coins also with dynastic continuity, see Instinsky, *Sicherheit als politisches Problem des römischen Kaisertums*, pp. 23–25. However,

Be this as it may, the diachronic development of *securitas* propaganda on imperial coins as a whole does not unambiguously point to a clear connection between the propagation of security and disturbances of the political order. It is also difficult to relate specific *securitas* messages to actual events. The most popular security message on third-century coins is *securitas Augusti* (image 19) or *securitas Augustorum*; during the reigns of 13 emperors, chronologically dispersed over the whole third century, coins bearing such a reference and displaying an image of the personification of Securitas were struck.⁶⁹ Instinsky claims that the slogan *securitas Augusti*, which propagates the security of the emperor's person, can be understood as commemorating a situation in which the life of the particular emperor was in danger.⁷⁰ *Securitas Augustorum* would then relate to dangerous situations in which two emperors reigning at the same time found themselves in.⁷¹ Instinsky uses a coin of Nero, the first emperor who actually issued coins bearing a security message, as an example for this hypothesis; he links this coin which propagates *SECVRITAS AVGVSTI* to the conspiracy of Piso against the last Julio-Claudian emperor.⁷² However, testing this hypothesis for the third century is nearly impossible because of the continuous threats posed to the emperors' lives in this era. It is perhaps telling that many of the ten emperors who did not put this particular legend on their coins, namely Didius Julianus, Septimius Severus, Caracalla, Macrinus, Elagabalus, Severus Alexander, Philippus I, Tacitus, Probus and Carus, did experience personal threats. Whereas the relation between the issuance of coins propagating *securitas Augusti* (or *Augustorum*) and the

Instinsky argues that 'zahlreichprägungen des Kaisers Septimius Severus vereinen immer wieder das Bild seiner Söhne Caracalla und Geta mit der Darstellung der *Securitas*', see p. 25. Yet, such coins are not listed for Septimius Severus in the *RIC*.

⁶⁹ *RIC* IV.2, Gordianus I, nos. 5, 11; *RIC* IV.2, Gordianus II, no. 6; *RIC* IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 311a), 311b), 312; *RIC* IV.3, Hostilianus, nos. 191a), 191b), 192, 225; *RIC* IV.3, Trebonianus Gallus, no. 124; *RIC* IV.3, Volusianus, no. 261; *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, no. 174; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 168, 237, 238, 239; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 68, 277, 392, 431, 514; *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 100, 101; *RIC* V.1, Quintillus, nos. 31, 32; *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, no. 38; *RIC* V.1, Florianus, nos. 53, 54, 94; *RIC* V.2, Numerianus, no. 450. *Securitas* is displayed either without specific attribute (column not included), or solely with scepter/spear/*caduceus*, or by altar with scepter.

⁷⁰ Instinsky, *Sicherheit als politisches Problem des römischen Kaisertums*, p. 21. In contrast with Instinsky's view, Jones argues that the legend *SECVRITAS AVGVSTI* on Nero's coin should not be considered a reference to the emperor's own personal safety but to the security which the emperor provides, see Jones, *A Dictionary of Ancient Roman Coins*, p. 283. Yet, he does not mention any argument to underpin his hypothesis.

⁷¹ On *SECVRITAS AVGG*, see Amit, 'Propagande de succès et d'euphorie dans l'empire romain', p. 61.

⁷² See *BMCRE* I, p. clxxixf; Instinsky, *Sicherheit als politisches Problem des römischen Kaisertums*, pp. 21–22.

actual security of the emperor's person in the third century seems to be unclear, the popularity of this message probably says something about its effectivity;⁷³ the fact that the security of the emperor himself obviously influenced the security of the Empire and its inhabitants might have a connection with this.⁷⁴

The security of the Empire's inhabitants was also explicitly propagated on third-century coins through a variety of legends. *SECVRITAS PVBLICA*, in combination with an image of *Securitas* with a globe, scepter or spear, was most widely used; Septimius Severus, Caracalla, Gordian III, Gallienus, Tacitus and Carus all disseminated this message through their coins.⁷⁵ In addition, Caracalla, Philippus I, Gallienus and Probus referred to *securitas orbis*, whereas solely Caracalla referred to *securitas imperii* on a coin type dated to the period 206–210.⁷⁶ Types bearing the legend *SECVRITAS P(opuli) R(omani)*, referring to the Roman people, were moreover issued under Didius Julianus and Tacitus.⁷⁷ With the communication of these specific *securitas* messages the emperor probably aimed to demonstrate that he cared for the Empire's inhabitants. He might also have tried to guarantee his own security which depended to a large extent on that of his subjects, especially in the third century.

The propagation of *securitas* could also go together with a computation of time; for instance, Caracalla, Elagabalus, Severus Alexander, Gordian III, Valerian, Gallienus, Claudius Gothicus, Tacitus and Probus all emphasized

⁷³ See K. Dahmen and P. Ilisch, "Securitas saeculi – a new revival of a Probus reverse-type in the gold coinage of Constantine I", *NC* 166 (2006), pp. 229–231; p. 231.

⁷⁴ Amit, "Propagande de succès et d'euphorie dans l'empire romain", p. 61.

⁷⁵ *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 56, 93, 729, 735; *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 332; *RIC* IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 61, 124, 130; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 281, 517; *RIC* V.1, Tacitus, no. 118; *RIC* V.2, Carus, no. 17. Two of Gordian's *securitas publica* types were struck on the occasion of his marriage with Sabinia Tranquillina in 241. Therefore, the message that these coins spread has also a dynastic connotation.

⁷⁶ *Securitas orbis*: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 22a), 22b), 43, 44a), 44b), 351a), 351b); *RIC* IV.3, Philippus I, nos. 48a), 48b), 190; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 240, 277; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 67, 278, 279, 432; *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 49, 50. *Securitas imperii*: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 168. The coins referring to *securitas orbis* bear an image of *Securitas* without attributes (column excluded), *Securitas* by altar with scepter, *Securitas* with scepter or with *cornucopiae* and *caduceus*. Caracalla's *securitas imperii* coin displays an image of *Securitas* by an altar on a chair with *cornucopiae* as arms, holding a scepter.

⁷⁷ *RIC* IV.1, Didius Julianus, no. 4; *RIC* V.1, Tacitus, no. 164. Didius Julianus' coin bears an image of *Securitas* with scepter and wreath, whereas Tacitus' coin displays *Salus* without any attribute. Why Instinsky links this message explicitly to the ruling class seems to be unclear, see Instinsky, *Sicherheit als politisches Problem des römischen Kaisertums*, p. 26.

securitas perpetua.⁷⁸ Apparently it was important for emperors who reigned in a turbulent period to propagate an eternal state of political stability. Such messages imply that these rulers, whose portrait stood on the obverse of the coin types, would provide a secure state of the Empire that lasted forever.⁷⁹ These messages, as well as coin types with references to *securitas saeculi* and *securitas temporum* that were issued under Macrinus, Elagabalus, Gallienus, Florian and Probus, probably served to legitimize the position of these men which often originated from situations of political instability, or they express attempts of these rulers to contrast their own reigns with earlier periods of political instability.⁸⁰

2.4 *Salus*

By means of the concept *Salus* the well-being of the Roman state was expressed. Although it was also of great significance in relation to individual Romans, the general notion of health was linked to the Roman state; from the end of the fourth century B.C., *Salus Publica* received cultic honors in the temple on the Quirinal.⁸¹ The foundation of the temple in

⁷⁸ *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 229a), 229b), 309A, 512a), 512b), 512c), 512d), 515, 520, 536a), 536b), 573a), 573b); *RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, no. 374; *RIC* IV.2, Severus Alexander, nos. 611, 612, 613, 614; *RIC* IV.3, Gordianus III, nos. 151, 152, 153, 164, 248D, 335a), 335b), 335c), 336; *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, nos. 17, 18, 19, 25, 256; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 69, 118, 280, 355, 356, 372, 452, 515, 516, 543; *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 243, 244; *RIC* V.1, Tacitus, no. 163; *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 476, 477, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 572, 572a, 573, 574, 575, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761. Most types display an image of *Securitas* with a scepter (sometimes standing at altar), others show *Securitas* with a spear, without any attributes or with *caduceus* and *cornucopiae*. A coin of Gordian III combines this legend with an image of *Felicitas* with *caduceus* and *cornucopiae*, which shows the influence of security on felicity. A coin type of Florian referring to *PEPETVITAS* and bearing an image of *Securitas* communicates the same message as the *securitas perpetua* coins. All these coins belong to the representational category 'aeternitas messages'.

⁷⁹ The influence of the (rule of the) emperor on security is clearly reflected by coins bearing the legend *POTESTAS PERPETV* (*RIC* IV.2, Severus Alexander, no. 594) or *PERPETVIT/PERPETVITA/PERPETVITATE/PERPETVITATI AVG* (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 504; *RIC* V.1, Florianus, nos. 76, 77, 78; *RIC* V.2, Probus, no. 317; *RIC* V.2, Carus, nos. 76, 77, 78, 79) and displaying an image of *Securitas*. Images of *Securitas* (with sceptre and/or by altar) also appear on coins with the emperor's titulature in the legend and, in the case of Macrinus, with the legend *VOTA PVBL* (*RIC* IV.2, Macrinus, nos. 12, 13, 132, 133).

⁸⁰ *Securitas saeculi*: *RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, no. 145; *RIC* V.1, Florianus, nos. 95, 105; *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 593, 594, 595, 596, 828, 894, 895, 896, 897. *Securitas temporum*: *RIC* IV.2, Macrinus, nos. 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 94A, 95, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 513. Coins bearing these messages display images of *Securitas* either with scepter, or with altar, or without attributes.

⁸¹ Winkler, *Salus*, p. 11. See also Marwood, *The Roman Cult of Salus*, pp. 2–5.

honor of the personified goddess, about which Livy reports,⁸² was closely linked to the diversion of the threats posed by the Samnites.⁸³ As Winkler observes, Rome's victory over this Italian tribe stood at the basis of the erection of the temple; the military successes shaped the condition for the worship of the well-being of the Roman state in the form of the deified personification of *salus*.⁸⁴

During the course of the Empire, the *salus* of the state was more and more understood as directly related to the emperor. This ideological development had its roots in Cicero's writings, heavily influenced by the civil unrest of the Late Republic, in which Cicero presented *salus publica* as dependent on the rescuing deeds of politicians.⁸⁵ In his *Pro Marcello*, for example, Caesar is represented as the man who would be able to guarantee the welfare of the Roman state.⁸⁶ During the reign of Augustus the idea that the public *salus* was dependant on (specific deeds of) the ruler took definite shape in rituals and iconography and from Nero onward the *salus* of the Roman state became equated with the *salus* of the emperor, which means that from now on the health of the state and people was guaranteed just by the mere existence of the Roman emperor.⁸⁷

References to *salus* on imperial coins appear for the first time under Tiberius. From Nero onward, representations of *salus* can be found on the coinage of nearly all emperors.⁸⁸ Motives for striking *salus* coins encompass the sickness of the emperor or other members of the imperial family, imperial travels and the propagation of successors.⁸⁹ Yet, from the reign of Hadrian onward, when the number of *salus* issues increased, coins bearing references to *salus* did not necessarily commemorate an actual historical event anymore; *salus* became a fixed part of imperial ideology.⁹⁰ The latter

⁸² Livy 9.43.25.

⁸³ See also Marwood, *The Roman Cult of Salus*, p. 147.

⁸⁴ Winkler, *Salus*, p. 16.

⁸⁵ Winkler, *Salus*, pp. 30–35; Marwood, *The Roman Cult of Salus*, p. 7.

⁸⁶ Cicero, *Pro Marcello* 22f. Following Alföldi, Schwarte observes furthermore that 'je stärker die Verfassungswirklichkeit sich zu Alleinherrschaft hin wandelte, desto prägnanteren Ausdruck fand der Gedanke, daß das Staatswohl von dem Wohlbefinden des führenden Mannes abhängt', see K-H. Schwarte, 'Salus Augusta Publica. Domitian und Trajan als Heilbringer des Staates', in: Lippold and Himmelfmann, *Bonner Festgabe Johannes Straub*, pp. 225–246; p. 227.

⁸⁷ Winkler, *Salus*, p. 60. See also A. Chaniotis, review of L. Winkler, *Salus. Vom Staatskult zur politischen Idee. Eine archäologische Untersuchung*, *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* 97.3.7.

⁸⁸ Marwood, *The Roman Cult of Salus*, pp. 22–31; Winkler, *Salus*, pp. 179–188.

⁸⁹ Winkler, *Salus*, p. 132.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 131 and 141.

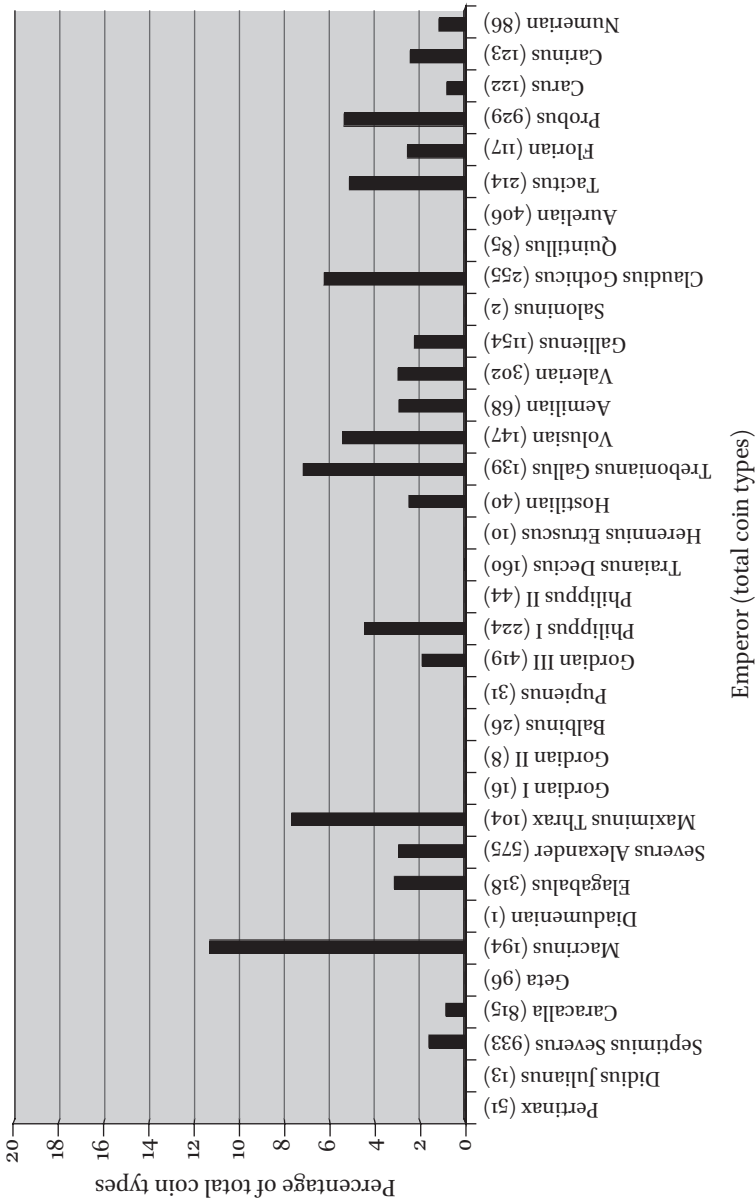


Figure 31 Proportions of coin types propagating *salus* per emperor

does not mean, however, that from this moment onward the minting of *salus* was completely independent from what actually happened nor that all emperors referred to *salus* on their coins to the same extent. The latter is illustrated aptly by the above graph (see figure 31).

This graph demonstrates that 14 third-century emperors refrained from putting *salus* on their coins. Most of these emperors were however short-lived; the only striking exception forms Aurelian. Whereas Marwood observes this ‘hiatus under Aurelian’ but gives no possible explanation for it,⁹¹ Winkler not even mentions that there were no *salus* types issued during the years 270–275. The lack of coin types for Aurelian might have a link with the extraordinary number of Sol types that were issued during the reign of this emperor, which can be considered another ideological exceptionality.⁹² As has been pointed out in chapter three, Sol could be considered interchangeable with the other sun god Apollo, who was also a god of healing. A coin type issued during Aurelian’s reign which bears the legend APOL CONS AVG and displays an image of Sol testifies to this.⁹³ In addition, in the years 270–275 coin types honoring both Apollo and Aesculapius as *conservator Augusti* were produced.⁹⁴ The high quantity of Sol types together with the Apollo and Aesculapius types issued during Aurelian’s reign might point to the possibility that it was not considered necessary to issue more coins that alluded to health, which could explain the lack of types referring to *salus* for the years 270–275.⁹⁵

In contrast with the lack of *salus* types for the reign of Aurelian, the number of coin types that propagate this particular benefit and were issued during the reign of Macrinus is conspicuously high. This high quantity of *salus* types attested for Macrinus is especially striking when compared with the low numbers of *salus* types issued during the reigns of his Severan predecessors Septimius Severus and Caracalla. This is, however, not the only difference between the Severans’ and Macrinus’ coin types referring to *salus*; whereas Macrinus’ types that refer to *salus* through their legend solely emphasize SALVS PVBLICA, Severus’ and Caracalla’s

⁹¹ Marwood, *The Roman Cult of Salus*, p. 28.

⁹² See p. 150. According to Winkler, a *salus* type bearing an image of Sol was issued during the reign of Claudius Gothicus, see Winkler, *Salus*, p. 174. However, this type does not occur in the *RIC*.

⁹³ *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, no. 66. See above, pp. 125–126.

⁹⁴ Apollo as *conservator*: *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, nos. 22, 23, 160–162, 243. Aesculapius as *conservator*: *RIC* V.1, Aurelianus, no. 258. See p. 132.

⁹⁵ Over the course of time, *salus* increasingly came to signify the physical health of an individual, see Winkler, *Salus*, p. 94.



Image 20 *Salus publica* (RIC IV.2, Macrinus, no. 83)

types proclaim SALVTI AVG/AVGG and, in the case of Caracalla, SAL(us) GEN(eris) HVM(ani).⁹⁶ This disparity is even more remarkable when the fact is taken into consideration that, after Caracalla's arrival in Nicomedia during the war with the Parthians, the Arval Brothers did not sacrifice anymore to *Salus Publica*, as they did usually, but to *Salus Imp(eratoris) Antonini*.⁹⁷ *Salus* is thus closely connected to the person of the emperor in the *Acta Arvalia*, which stands in contrast with Macrinus' coins that refer to the whole Roman state. It seems, then, that Macrinus, the equestrian emperor who was probably involved in Caracalla's murder and could not justify his power dynastically, reacted against Severan ideology and tried to legitimize his emperorship by means of employing this 'republican' allusion.⁹⁸

Looking at the overall diachronic development of the representation of *salus* on third-century imperial coinage, it is obvious that from Hostilian on more emperors referred to this concept on their coins than before. It is furthermore noticeable that, when we look at the specific *salus* messages that were propagated, the legend SALVS PVBLICA gained ground in a large part of precisely this period (*image 20*). More specifically, in the reigns from 253 onward, Valerian, Gallienus, Tacitus, Florian and Probus referred, next to their personal health (SALVS AVG(VSTI)/AVGG),⁹⁹ to public health on their coins, whereas before the reign of Valerian only coins that were

⁹⁶ SALVS PVBLICA: RIC IV.2, Macrinus, nos. 82–89, 197–200. SALVTI AVG(G): RIC IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 119, 119A, 497A), 497B), 530, 747. SAL GEN HVM: RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 42a), 42b), 42c), 350.

⁹⁷ W. Henzen, *Acta Fratrum Arvalium* (Berlin, 1874), ccf. 1–9; Marwood, *The Roman Cult of Salus*, pp. 47–48; Winkler, *Salus*, pp. 173–174.

⁹⁸ Winkler, *Salus*, p. 174.

⁹⁹ The only exception for this period forms Florian, who, as did Macrinus, referred only to SALVS PVBLICA on his coinage.

issued under Macrinus and Severus Alexander displayed SALVS PVBLICA.¹⁰⁰ Although coins referring to *salus Augusti* indirectly propagate *salus publica* and vice versa, since the health of the emperor and the health of the Roman state were inextricably intertwined, the latter was explicitly emphasized in the years 253–282. A deliberate choice must thus have been made to propagate *salus publica* separately and, therefore, the messages *salus publica* and *salus Augusti* cannot be understood as identical, even though the iconography on these *salus publica* coins (Salus feeding a snake) does not differ from that on *salus Augusti* coins.¹⁰¹ The rise in the minting of SALVS PVBLICA types during the second part of the third century probably reflects the increasing threats that were posed to the Roman state as a whole in this period.

Most third-century coin types referring to *salus* thus bear the legend SALVS AVG(VSTI)/AVGG or SALVS PVBLI/PVBLIC/PVBLICA and display an image of Salus feeding a snake, symbol of physical health.¹⁰² On coins of Gallienus and Claudius Gothicus that bear the legend SALVS AVG the goddess Salus is sometimes replaced by other deities, such as Isis, Aesculapius or Apollo (the latter two both healing gods), who, instead of Salus, guaranteed the emperor's health and well-being.¹⁰³

Salus coins with, for the third century, deviating legends are minted during the reigns of Caracalla, Elagabalus, Gallienus and Probus. Under Caracalla, four types that bear the legend SAL(us) GEN(eris) HVM(ani) and display an image of Salus raising a kneeling figure were issued (*image 27*).¹⁰⁴ These coins, dated to the years 199–200, allude to the welfare of the whole

¹⁰⁰ SALVS PVBLICA: *RIC* V.1, Valerianus, no. 255; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 401; *RIC* V.1, Tacitus, nos. 58, 121, 159–162; *RIC* V.1, Florianus, nos. 92, 93; *RIC* V.2, Probus, nos. 566–71.

¹⁰¹ Winkler, *Salus*, p. 174.

¹⁰² On the snake as attribute of Aesculapius, Hygieia, Salus etc., see Winkler, *Salus*, pp. 101–110. Coin types that display an image of Salus and refer solely to imperial titulature in the legend: *RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, nos. 195A, 199, 210, 221, 230, 236, 242, 245, 326A; *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 82, 196, 201; *RIC* IV.2, Macrinus, nos. 23, 44, 44A, 124, 142; *RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, no. 283; *RIC* IV.2, Severus Alexander, nos. 13, 14, 31, 32, 41, 42, 269, 393, 394, 396.

¹⁰³ Isis: *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 217–218. Aesculapius: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 66, 511, 511a, 511b; *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 165–167. Apollo: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 610; *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 97, 216. On two *salus* types issued by Claudius Gothicus, Diana and Apollo appear together: *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 219–220. Another *salus* coin struck under Claudius Gothicus displays the image of an eagle, Jupiter's attribute: *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, no. 117. See Winkler, *Salus*, p. 174.

¹⁰⁴ *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 42a), 42b), 42c), 350. Similar types were issued earlier under Galba, Trajan and Commodus, see p. 218 with n. 110.



Image 21 *Salus generis humani* (RIC IV.1, Caracalla, no. 350)

human race, *id est* the inhabitants of the Roman Empire,¹⁰⁵ and can thus be understood as propagating the unification of the people within the Empire.¹⁰⁶ It is perhaps not coincidental that coins bearing this specific message were minted under Caracalla, the emperor who issued the *Constitutio Antoniniana* in 212, the unification edict *par excellence*. These coins might have prepared the way for the edict ideologically.¹⁰⁷ If there would be such a programmatic connection between the *salus generis humani* coins and the *Constitutio Antoniniana*, it has severe consequences for our interpretation of the decree; its issuance, then, would not have been a reaction to *ad hoc* circumstances, such as the murder on Geta or the financial state of the Empire, but, more likely, an attempt to create a bond between emperor and citizens or to boost Roman identity.¹⁰⁸ Yet, it is important to keep in mind that these coins were minted more than ten years before the issuance of the *Constitutio Antoniniana*, which might complicate a connection between the *salus generis humani* coins and the edict. Therefore, another possibility could be that Caracalla wanted to associate himself with Commodus by copying a particular aspect of the last Antonine's

¹⁰⁵ Schwarte, "Salus Augusta Publica", pp. 233–34.

¹⁰⁶ On the basis of Trajan's *salus generis humani* coins and the writings of Pliny, Instinsky claims that the concept *genus humani* alludes to the inhabitants of the provinces and contrasts it with *populus romanus*, see H.U. Instinsky, "Salus Generis Humani", in: *HBN* 1 (1947), pp. 5–9; pp. 7f. See also Schwarte, "Salus Augusta Publica", p. 239. Yet, Winkler argues that *genus humani* does not have an anti-roman connotation and that, by the use of this concept, the inhabitants of the provinces are put on a par with the Roman citizens, see Winkler, *Salus*, p. 68 and Schwarte, "Salus Augusta Publica", p. 239.

¹⁰⁷ See also Winkler, *Salus*, p. 176 with n. 1027.

¹⁰⁸ See above, p. 21.

visual program, namely his *salus generis humani* propaganda.¹⁰⁹ After all, Commodus' and Caracalla's coins bear the same iconography, i.e. Salus raising a kneeling figure, whereas the images on the coins of the other two emperors who issued *salus generis humani* coins during the principate are different; on the coins of Galba and Trajan Salus is displayed with globe, *patera* over altar and rudder.¹¹⁰ In addition, Caracalla's *salus generis humani* coins were minted in the period that he and Septimius Severus were both Augusti, and it is common knowledge that Severus adopted himself and his sons into the Antonine dynasty in order to legitimize their power.¹¹¹ Copying this aspect of Commodus' propaganda might thus have been part of the legitimization of the new Severan dynasty.¹¹²

Other exceptional legends can be found on the *salus* coins of Elagabalus, Gallienus and Probus.¹¹³ Under Elagabalus seven coin types with the legend SALVS ANTONINI AVG were issued.¹¹⁴ While on coins referring to *salus Augusti* the concept well-being is applied to the reigning emperor in general, these coins of Elagabalus specifically proclaim the health of the emperor Antoninus, alias Elagabalus. He was not the first nor the last third-century (anti-)emperor under whose rule *salus* was personalized; as already mentioned before, during Caracalla's emperorship Salus Publica was replaced with Salus Imperatoris Antonini in the Acta Arvalia and the Gallic emperor Postumus also propagated SALVS POSTVMI AVG on his coins.¹¹⁵ Elagabalus' and Postumus' coins as well as Caracalla's change of the Acta Arvalia might reflect personal threats of these rulers, which was the order of the day in the third century. Yet, these expressions should not be considered hints at a larger personalization process regarding *salus* in the third century; the number of *salus publica* types issued under Macrinus

¹⁰⁹ On Commodus' *salus* coins see for instance C. de Ranieri, "Salus, felicitas, fortuna: le virtù di un imperatore romano. Analisi di alcune monete Comodiane", *RIN* 102 (2001), pp. 167–191.

¹¹⁰ *RIC* III, Commodus, no. 260; *RIC* I, Galba, nos. 21, 22, 122, 123; *RIC* II, Trajan, no. 148B.

¹¹¹ Septimius Severus' son's name was also changed into Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, see below, p. 225 n. 1.

¹¹² See further Hekster, *Commodus*, pp. 186–195 on the influence of Commodian iconography on Severan images.

¹¹³ Macrinus also issued coin types bearing the legend VOTA PVBL and displaying an image of *salus* (*RIC* IV.2, Macrinus, nos. 10, 11, 130, 131). Furthermore, a coin type of Claudius Gothicus shows that *salus* and *spes* could be combined in imperial propaganda (*RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, no. 222).

¹¹⁴ *RIC* IV.2, Elagabalus, nos. 136–140, 372–373.

¹¹⁵ Change of the Acta Arvalia, see above p. 215. SALVS POSTVMI AVG: *RIC* V.2, Postumus, nos. 281, 328.

and the increase of coins proclaiming *salus publica* in the second half of the third century point otherwise.¹¹⁶

During the reign of Gallienus coin types that bear the legends OB CONSERVATIONEM SALVT(IS), OB CONSERVATIONEM SALVTIS AVGG and OB CONSERVATIONEM PATRIAE together with an image of Salus feeding a snake were struck.¹¹⁷ These types belong to a larger series that encompass also types propagating OB LIBERTATEM RECEP TAM and OB REDDIT LIBERT.¹¹⁸ The *salus* types within this series refer to the salvation of imperial health (*ob conservationem salutis augustorum*) which, simultaneously, signifies the salvation of the 'home land' (*ob conservationem patriae*).¹¹⁹ Probably, these coins, as the whole 'ob-series', can be dated to 263 and refer to the victory over Postumus.¹²⁰ A coin type, dated to 258, that bears the legend SALVS ITAL and shows an image of Salus offering fruits to the emperor also refers indirectly to Postumus; it can be considered a reaction to the separation of provinces from the Empire.¹²¹

Another clear reaction on contemporary circumstances is the SALVS MILITVM coin type issued under Probus.¹²² It displays an image of Salus feeding a snake and alludes to the well-being of the troops, which reflects the growing imperial dependence on the army that characterized the third century.¹²³ This type of Probus as well as the other, aforementioned, coins that bear exceptional references to *salus* demonstrate that, when compared with the *salus* coins issued in the first and second centuries,¹²⁴ there is more variety in the allusions to well-being on coins minted in the third century. Moreover, these coins with exceptional references to *salus* seem to bear a relationship with actual circumstances in this period. The latter can possibly also be said of the diachronic development of attention paid to *salus* in general (see figure 31) and to *salus publica* in particular on

¹¹⁶ Winkler, *Salus*, pp. 173–174.

¹¹⁷ OB CONSERVATIONEM SALVT(IS) (AVGG): *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 59, 144, 423. OB CONSERVATIONEM PATRIAE: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 143.

¹¹⁸ OB LIBERTAT(EM) REC(EPTAM): *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 60, 61, 145, 424. OB REDDIT LIBERT: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 146, 247, 425. See also below, p. 294.

¹¹⁹ Winkler, *Salus*, p. 172. On the use of 'AVGG', see pp. 293–294 n. 143.

¹²⁰ Alföldi, *Studien zur Geschichte der Weltkrise des 3. Jahrhunderts nach Christus*, pp. 57–72; De Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus*, p. 131. See also below, p. 294.

¹²¹ *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 400. Since this coin type has a geographic connotation, it is divided into the representational category 'geographical messages'. See Winkler, *Salus*, p. 177.

¹²² *RIC* V.2, Probus, no. 98. Since this coin type has a military connotation, it is divided into the representational category 'military representation'.

¹²³ See above, p. 91.

¹²⁴ Marwood, *The Roman Cult of Salus*, pp. 21–26; Winkler, *Salus*, pp. 179–183.

imperial coins in the years between 193 and 284; the increase of both the number of emperors who paid attention to a particular form of *salus* on their coins and the number of emperors propagating *salus publica* through their coins in the second half of the third century can probably be related to the overall situation of Empire and emperor in this period. It seems, thus, that, although the propagation of *salus* was part of ideological tradition, actual circumstances influenced the propagation of the health of Empire and emperor in the third century.

GENERAL THIRD-CENTURY TRENDS IN NUMISMATIC IMPERIAL REPRESENTATION

The previous chapters have been analyzing general representational patterns on third-century imperial coinage. Since the next part of this book discusses patterns at a level of case studies, it might be useful to briefly summarize the main findings of this first part.

Analyses of third-century coin types reveal patterns on three different levels within numismatic imperial representation during one of the most turbulent periods in Roman history. Regarding patterns on the first level, a quantitative examination demonstrates that emperors reigning in the period 193–284 preferred four types of propaganda mostly on their coins: military representation, divine association, the propagation of virtues and of a *saeculum aureum*. Other representational forms were also used, but clearly to a lesser extent.

Within these four much-used representational categories, specific aspects received most emphasis. While third-century military coinage accentuates the role of the emperor as general, represents victory and refers directly to the Roman armies, most ‘religious’ coins represented deities, specifically Jupiter, Hercules, Mars, Sol and Apollo. As for imperial virtues, the majority of third-century emperors propagated their *providentia*, *liberalitas*, *virtus*, *pietas* and *aequitas*. Lastly, *felicitas*, *pax*, *securitas* and *salus* were the slogans employed most often in order to propagate a golden age.

Both quantitative and qualitative analyses of these specific aspects of military representation, divine association, the propagation of virtues and of *saeculum aureum* also reveal particular trends. Quantitative analyses demonstrate, for example, that from the reign of Aemilian onward references to Jupiter and Hercules increased, that from Gordian III onward *virtus* was propagated more frequently on coins and that from Hostilian onward more emperors referred to *salus*. Qualitative analyses uncover, for instance, that the variety of references to the armed forces increased at a specific moment in the third century (from Valerian onward), that particular functions of deities recurred on third-century coins, that the depiction of an individual soldier on *virtus* coins gained prominence from the reign of Valerian onward and that the propagation of *securitas* often went together with computations of time and place.

Often, but certainly not always, these patterns on all three levels seem to have a connection with the actual situation in the third century; intensifying military problems, for example, might have caused a rise in *virtus* types and the increasing distance between Rome and the emperor was mirrored by a decrease of coin types presenting the emperor as *sacerdos*.

To what extent comparable patterns and a similar relationship between 'image' and 'reality' also apply within individual reigns is the central focus of the next part.

PART TWO

CASE STUDIES

CHAPTER SIX

CARACALLA

1. IMAGES OF CARACALLA

At the beginning of 198, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, better known as Caracalla, was made co-emperor.¹ From this moment onward, he held sway over the Roman Empire together with his father Septimius Severus. In addition, Septimius Severus' other son, Geta, became Augustus in 209. By appointing his sons as successors, Severus established a new imperial dynasty.² Unfortunately, Severus' admonitions to his sons to rule the Empire harmoniously fell on deaf ears. Already during Severus' life Caracalla and Geta started quarrelling:

As brothers they were also mutually antagonistic; this dated back to their rivalry as children when they quarrelled over quail fights or meetings in the cock-pit or wrestling bouts with each other. Their divided interests in the theatre and recitations also always encouraged this rivalry because they never had the same tastes; anything one liked, the other hated.³

After Severus' death in Britain in 211, the brothers' antagonism increased as they were forced to share the imperial purple:

His [Severus'] sons, who were by now young men, hurried back to Rome with their mother, but already on the return journey there were serious differences between them. For example, they did not stay at the same lodging houses nor take a meal together. Each was extremely circumspect with everything he ate and drank in case the other quietly made the first move,

¹ In 195, Caracalla's official name Lucius Septimius Bassianus was changed into Marcus Aurelius Antoninus (see D. Baharal, *Victory of Propaganda. The Dynastic Aspect of the Imperial Propaganda of the Severi: the Literary and Archaeological Evidence* (Oxford, 1996) p. 21). Caracalla was given his nickname because it is said that 'on many occasions he took off his Roman cloak and appeared wearing German clothes' (Herodian, 4.7.3: πολλάκις δὲ καὶ τὴν Ῥωμαϊκὴν ἀποθέμενος χλαμύδα ἡμφιέννυτο τὰ Γερμανῶν περιβλήματα). This German dress included a cloak called the *caracallus* (see H.A. Caracalla 9.7–8; Herodian 4.7.3 with n. 1).

² Birley, *Septimius Severus*, p. 130.

³ Herodian 3.10.3–4: πρὸς τε ἀλλήλους ἐστασίαζον οἱ ἀδελφοί, τὰ πρῶτα μὲν ὑπὸ παιδαριώδους φιλονεικίας δι' ὀρτύγων μάχας καὶ ἀλεκτρυόνων συμβολὰς πάλας τε παίδων ἀλλήλοις ἐπίζοντες, ἢ τε περὶ τὰ θεάματα αὐτῶν ἢ τὰ ἀκροάματα σπουδῇ φιλονείκως ἐκάστοτε ἐμερίζετο· καὶ οὐδενὶ ἀμφοτέροι ὁμοίως ἡρέσκοντο, ἀλλὰ πᾶν τὸ τῷ ἐτέρῳ φίλον τῷ ἄλλῳ ἐχθρὸν ἦν.

or persuaded some of the attendants to administer a fatal dose of poison. Hence there was even greater haste on the journey, since they both believed they would breathe more safely when they reached Rome and divided up the palace, where they could each live their separate lives according to their own interests in a vast, spacious building that was bigger than any city.⁴

Eventually, this mutual hate and rivalry resulted in Geta's death – Caracalla murdered him in 212. After the fratricide, Caracalla became sole ruler. In 217 his reign came to an end with the assassination of Caracalla, in which probably the praetorian prefect Macrinus, who became the first equestrian Roman emperor, was involved.

The monumental remains of Caracalla's fratricide were – and are still – visible to everybody in the *Forum Romanum* in Rome. Geta's name has been carefully chiselled away from an inscription on the triumphal arch of Septimius Severus, replaced by additional titles for Septimius Severus and Caracalla. This *damnatio memoriae* represents Caracalla's effort to damn the memory of his brother who died by his hand.⁵

The murder of Geta and the subsequent persecution of Geta's supporters play an important role in Caracalla's ancient biographies; they fit perfectly into the picture of Caracalla as cruel tyrant that Cassius Dio, Herodian, and the author of the *Historia Augusta* sketch.⁶ Besides presenting Caracalla as a savage ruler, they also portray him as a true 'soldier-emperor'.⁷ Caracalla is stated to have considered soldiers superior to senators,⁸ which would have made him even more unpopular with senatorial biographers. Indeed, Dio explicitly presented Caracalla as an emperor who marched

⁴ Herodian 4.1.1–2: οἱ δ' υἱεῖς αὐτοῦ, ἤδη νεανίαι, ἅμα τῇ μητρὶ ἐς τὴν Ῥώμην ἠπειγόντο, ἥδη μὲν κατὰ τὴν ὁδὸν στασιάζοντες πρὸς ἀλλήλους. οὔτε γὰρ καταγωγαῖς ταῖς αὐταῖς ἐχρῶντο οὔτε συνειστιώντο ἀλλήλοις· πολὺ δὲ τὸ ὑποπτον ἐν ἅπασιν ἐδέσμασί τε καὶ πόμασι, μὴ τις αὐτῶν προλαβὼν καὶ λαθὼν, ἢ τινὰς ἀναπέσας τῶν ὑπηρετῶν, δηλητηρίῳ χρήσεται φαρμάκῳ. ταύτη γοῦν καὶ τὴν ὁδοιπορίαν ἔτι μάλλον ἠπειγον, ἀδεέστερον ἑκάτερος βιώσεσθαι προσδοκῶν, εἰ ἐν τῇ Ῥώμῃ γένοιτο καὶ τὰ βασιλεια διελόμενοι ἐν πλατείᾳ καὶ πολλῇ οἰκήσει καὶ πάσης πόλεως μείζονι καθ' ἑαυτὸν ἑκάτερος διάγοι ὥς βούλοιτο.

⁵ See on *damnatio memoriae* of Geta: De Jong, *Emperors in Egypt*, pp. 144–169; J. de Jong, "Propaganda or pragmatism? *Damnatio memoriae* in third-century papyri and imperial representation", in: S. Benoist ed., *Mémoire et histoire: condamnation dans l'antiquité romaine* (Metz, 2007), pp. 95–111; E. Varner, *Mutilation and Transformation. Damnatio memoriae and Roman Imperial Portraiture* (Leiden and Boston, 2004), pp. 168–184.

⁶ See further B. Campbell, "The Severan Dynasty", in: Bowman, Garnsey and Cameron, *CAH* 12², pp. 1–27; p. 16. Surprisingly, no academic biography of Caracalla has been published recently.

⁷ Compared to Dio and Herodian, the author of the *Historia Augusta* does not emphasize this aspect of Caracalla's image.

⁸ Cass. Dio 78.13.6 (οὐδ' ἡσχύνθη πλεῖονα ἐκεῖνῳ χάριν ἢ τοῖς στρατιώταις, οὓς καὶ ἡμῶν ἀεὶ κρείττους ἦγεν, ἔχων).

with the soldiers and behaved as a fellow-soldier.⁹ Caracalla's massive military expenditures, which caused him grave financial problems, are also mentioned by Dio. According to him, Caracalla said the following to his soldiers after the assassination of Geta:

"I am one of you", he said, "and it is because of you alone that I care to live, in order that I may confer upon you many favours; for all the treasuries are yours."¹⁰

These two traits, cruelty and self-presentation as soldier-emperor, dominate Caracalla's image in surviving classical literature. A significant measure taken by Caracalla in 212, however, remains almost unnoticed in ancient texts. As stated above, his *Constitutio Antoniniana* declared nearly all free inhabitants of the Roman Empire to be Roman citizens.¹¹ This edict was thus an important step in unifying the Roman Empire, and it is therefore surprising that surviving authors barely mentioned it.¹²

The image of the emperor Caracalla is largely defined by the literary sources. But they only tell us how these particular authors perceived the emperor. Their image likely differs profoundly from the way in which the emperor wanted to be perceived; in most cases, we should not expect emperors' representation of their own power and the perception thereof by the elite to overlap. Which image of Caracalla, then, was broadcast to all parts of the Empire by the center of imperial power or, in other words, how did Caracalla want to be perceived?

An analysis of Caracalla's coins might give us an answer on this question. After all, as argued in chapter one, deployment of imperial coinage was probably the most efficient and effective medium by which the center of power could convey an image of the emperor and his reign. Through coins, the emperor disseminated his idealized self-image over a large proportion of the Empire and to all segments of the population.

⁹ See p. 70 (Cass. Dio 78.13.1). See further F.G.B. Millar, *A Study of Cassius Dio* (Oxford, 1964), pp. 150–160.

¹⁰ Cass. Dio 78.3.2: "εἷς" γὰρ ἔφησεν "ἐξ ὑμῶν εἰμι, καὶ δι' ὑμᾶς μόνους ζῆι ἐθέλω, ἵν' ὑμῖν πολλὰ χαρίζωμαι: ὑμετέροι γὰρ οἱ θησαυροὶ πάντες εἰσὶ."

¹¹ See also above, p. 21. Although Caracalla might have intended the edict as an appeasement to the gods who had 'preserved him from Geta's coup' (see *Papyrus Gissensis* 40, col. 1.1–12), Dio states that the decree was a hidden tax-raising measure (Cass. Dio 78.9.4–5: οὐ ἔνεκα καὶ Ῥωμαίους πάντας τοὺς ἐν τῇ ἀρχῇ αὐτοῦ, λόγῳ μὲν τιμῶν, ἔργῳ δὲ ὅπως πλείω αὐτῷ καὶ ἐκ τοῦ τοιοῦτου προσίη διὰ τὸ τοὺς ξένους τὰ πολλὰ αὐτῶν μὴ συντελεῖν, ἀπέδειξεν).

¹² On the *Constitutio Antoniniana* see also above, p. 21. On the interpretation of the edict, see also above, p. 217.

For the analysis of Caracalla's image spread by imperial coins I focused on the coin types minted in the period between his appointment as Augustus in 198 and his death in 217, which adds up to 815 coin types.¹³ I divided them into the same thirteen representational categories that were presented in part one (see figure 1). Almost 40% of Caracalla's coin types belong to the category 'divine association', while 23% of the types represent military themes. The most significant representational categories besides these are '*saeculum aureum*' (10%) and 'virtues' (9%). Among the less-represented categories, 'dynastic representation' (5%), '*aeternitas* messages' (almost 4%) and unique messages (almost 4%) turn up most often, while '*euergesia*', 'elevation', '*restitutor* messages', 'geographical messages', and 'non-specific representation' constitute less than 3% each of Caracalla's total types. 0.4 percent of his types bear a message that is ambiguous and therefore hard to fit into a single category.¹⁴

In his coinage, Caracalla heavily stressed 'the divine'; gods played an important role on the types minted during his reign.¹⁵ This seems to correlate with Dio's assertion that Caracalla claimed to be the most pious of all mankind.¹⁶ Furthermore, although Dio and Herodian present undoubtedly a caricatural image of Caracalla as soldier-emperor, the emperor's military interest can be derived from his coins as well. After all, military themes were present on many types.

Before analyzing Caracalla's coin types in detail, we should discuss diachronic variation in the production of the different representational categories under Caracalla (which is not visible in figure 32). Over Caracalla's 19 years as emperor, the relative prominence of each category within the representation of power in general fluctuated. Moreover, out of his 19 years, 13 constituted joint *imperium* together with his father Septimius Severus, the senior Augustus. During this joint reign, Caracalla could hardly have been solely (and probably not even largely)

¹³ Coin types with two obverses or coin types that are barbarous or hybrid are left out of consideration (see p. 40 with n. 155).

¹⁴ The total percentage is more than 100% because some coin types belong to more than one category.

¹⁵ See also I. Mennen, "The image of an emperor in trouble. Legitimation and representation of power by Caracalla", in: L. de Blois, P. Funke, J. Hahn eds., *The Impact of Imperial Rome on Religions, Ritual and Religious Life in the Roman Empire. IMEM 5* (Leiden and Boston, 2006), pp. 253–267.

¹⁶ Cass. Dio 78.16.1 (ὅτι λέγων εὐσεβέστατος πάντων ἀνθρώπων εἶναι). On Caracalla's piety see also *Papyrus Gissensis* 40, col. 1.1–12. As stated on p. 178 n. 104, *pius felix* was included in the imperial titulature of all emperors from Caracalla onward.

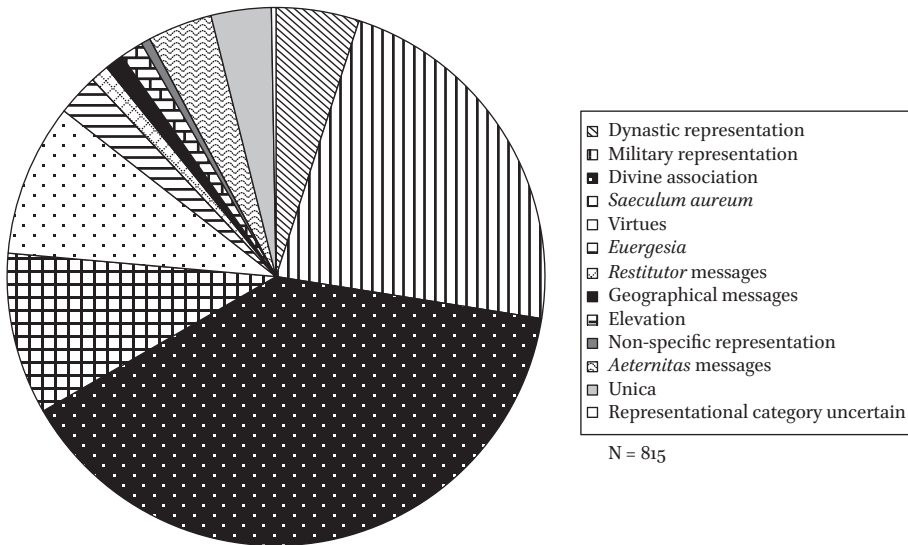


Figure 32 Proportions of coin types distributed over the representational categories for the period A.D. 198–217

responsible for the imagery on his coinage. A separate analysis of the representational themes on coins struck during Caracalla's and Severus' joint reign as well as an examination of these coins minted during Caracalla's sole reign would then be salutary and could possibly ascertain who deserved responsibility for the messages on coins in general.

2. COMPARING IMPERIAL IMAGERY ON COIN TYPES ISSUED IN 198–210 AND 212–217

For the period 198–210 (Septimius Severus' and Caracalla's joint reign) 318 coin types were issued. In 212–217 (Caracalla's sole rule) 357 types are listed in *RIC*.¹⁷ The near-equality between the number of coin types issued during the joint reign and that of coin types issued during Caracalla's sole rule implies that the number of coin types produced per year increased under Caracalla alone. It is obvious, then, that from 198 to 210 fewer coin types were issued per year than in 212–217 (see appendix four). As Septimius Severus' coin types as listed in the *RIC* show, more types

¹⁷ As mentioned earlier, Caracalla ruled together with Geta for a short while after Septimius Severus' death.

were minted in the senior Augustus' name during the years of joint rule. The increase of Caracalla's coin types produced each year in the period 212–217 (with a peak in 215) would then be explained by Caracalla's sole *imperium*. Other possibilities are that there was either no need to introduce new coin types in the period 198–210, since the messages on existing coin types were considered sufficient, or that there were simply enough coins in circulation.¹⁸

The 32 coin types minted in 211, the year in which Septimius Severus died, are excluded from the analysis of types struck during the two separate periods (198–210 and 212–217, see figures 33 and 34), since this year marks the transition from joint to sole rule. Naturally, these coin types are included in the analysis of Caracalla's overall representation, i.e. the image that can be reconstructed from looking at coin types from both the joint reign with his father and his sole reign (see figure 32). The same applies to the 108 coin types which are undated at this point, dated only within the periods 209–212 or 210–213, or roughly/possibly dated to a certain period; though they are excluded from the analyses of Caracalla's joint and sole reigns, they have been used for the general numismatic picture of Caracalla's reign (see figure 32).

Figure 33 shows how Caracalla's coin types range over the various representation categories in the period 198–210. Figure 34 shows the same for 212–217.¹⁹ Both graphs are based on the tables presented in appendix four. These tables present a precise overview of the number of coin types issued during the different years of Caracalla's reign and their division into representational categories. They show thus the variations in Caracalla's representation for the various stages of his reign. These tables reveal that, compared to the years of his joint rule, Caracalla transformed the self-representation of his imperial power strikingly for his sole reign. The above graphs, however, show the discrepancy between joint and sole reign more clearly.

The image presented in figure 33 resembles the typical picture of the representation of imperial power on third century coinage (see figure 1). 'Military representation' (30.5%), 'divine association' (18.2%), '*saeculum aureum*' (15.7%), and 'virtues' (14.2%) are the largest categories and, among these large categories, coin types bearing military themes were

¹⁸ For the correlation between coin types and actual coin numbers, see above, pp. 53–62.

¹⁹ The total percentage of coin types in both graphs is more than 100% because some types belong to multiple categories.

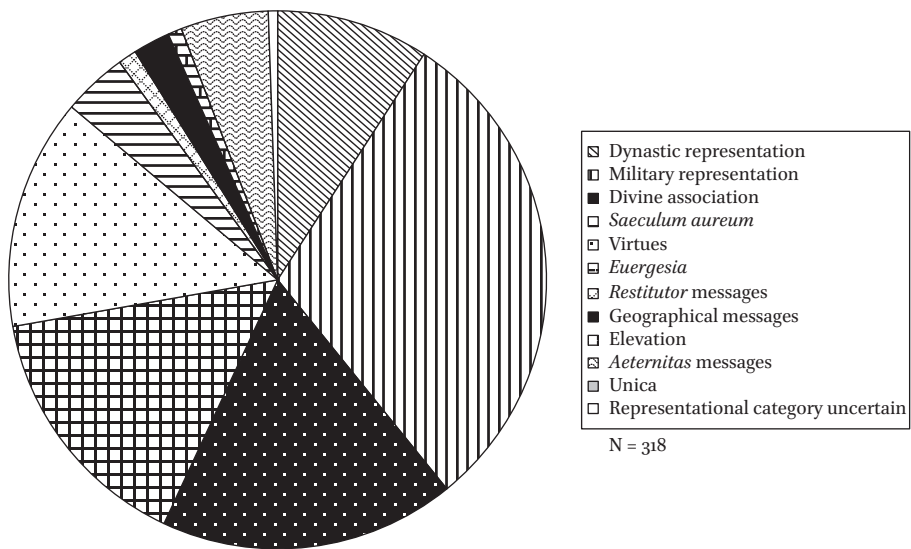


Figure 33 Proportions of coin types distributed over the representational categories for the period A.D. 198–210

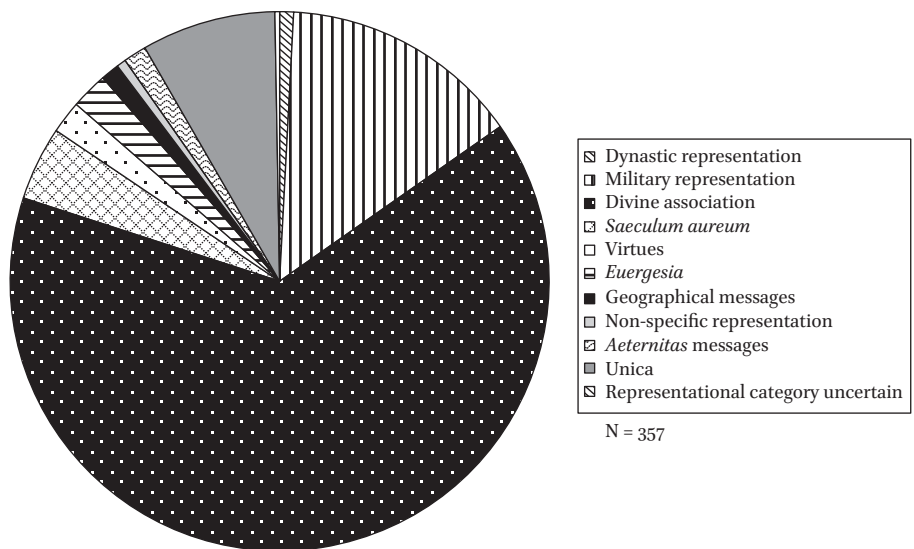


Figure 34 Proportions of coin types distributed over the representational categories for the period A.D. 212–217

issued the most. Compared to the general image that third century coins present, the categories of 'aeternitas messages' (5.3%), 'euergesia' (3.8%), 'geographical messages' (2.2%), and 'restitutor messages' (1.3%) also show similar sizes. From 198 to 210, however, dynastic representation seems to have held prominence (9.4%). The latter differs from the minor position that dynastic representation occupied in the representation of imperial power on third-century coins in general.

When looking at figure 34, coin types presenting divine association are strikingly predominant in the period 212–217. This expansion of the category 'divine association' (66.9%) diminished the proportion of types from other categories. *Restitutor* messages and elevation themes disappear wholly. As for the other three large categories for the period 198–210, 'military representation' (14.8%) and '*saeculum aureum*' (4.5%) were halved, while the position of 'virtues' (2%) fell to almost nothing. The same goes for the categories 'dynastic representation' (0.8%), 'euergesia' (2.2%), 'geographical messages' (1.1%), and 'aeternitas messages' (1.4%). Additionally, contrary to the joint rule only some coin types struck in the period 212–217 bear a deviant type of representation and are therefore assigned to the category 'unica' (8.4%).

Caracalla's self-representation on coins struck in the period 212–217 thus differed profoundly from that of 198–210. The most obvious explanation for this shift in imperial representation is Septimius Severus' influence on Caracalla's coinage during their joint reign. The development of dynastic representation provides the clearest evidence for this hypothesis; whereas attention to the *domus divina*, an important aspect of Severus' propaganda, remains constant from 198 to 210, it decreased sharply in 212–217.²⁰ It seems that the senior Augustus controlled the imagery presented on the coinage of the junior Augustus.²¹ After the death of Severus, Caracalla seems to have pursued his own wishes.

As we have seen in the above section, the proportions of the various representational categories differed according to the phase of Caracalla's reign. Can we also distinguish between joint rule and sole rule in the messages broadcast by coin types assigned to a specific representational category? Was there a difference between, for example, the particular military

²⁰ On the *domus divina* see E. Lo Cascio, "The Age of the Severans", in: Bowman, Garnsey and Cameron eds., *CAH* 12², pp. 137–155; p. 140. Hekster, *Commodus*, p. 194. On Severus' dynastic propaganda in general see Baharal, *Victory of Propaganda*, pp. 20–42.

²¹ It is plausible that the same happened in other joint reigns with a distinction between a junior and a senior Augustus.

messages spread during Caracalla's and Septimius Severus' joint reign versus the military messages spread during Caracalla's sole reign? Or did the coin types belonging to the same respective categories present identical messages during both phases?

2.1 *Divine association*

The position of 'divine association' in coinage within the numismatic representation of power in general during Caracalla's and Severus' joint reign differed widely from its position under Caracalla alone. When we compare the various 'religious' messages spread by coin types issued in the period 198–210 with the 'religious' messages on coin types struck from 212 to 217, we see much attention to deities in both periods.²² However, a striking collection of new gods was introduced on coinage in the latter period.

During the period of joint rule, Mars and Sol appeared most frequently on Caracalla's coin types from the category 'divine association'. Several coin types displaying an image of the sun god bear the legend PACATOR ORBIS or RECTOR ORBIS.²³ Although these legends complement an image of Sol, they might refer – indirectly – to the emperor. In addition to these two deities, Minerva, Liber, and Hercules are presented on several types minted in this period.²⁴ Liber and Hercules (in the guise of Melquart) are the patron gods of Lepcis Magna, Severus' hometown.²⁵ Only in the year 204 were Liber and Hercules represented together as the *di patrii*.²⁶ In this year, the *ludi saeculares* took place. Furthermore, five coin types were issued (two dated to the period 202–204 and three to

²² Two coin types showing nameless river gods are excluded from this analysis (*RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 96, 175).

²³ RECTOR ORBIS: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 39a), 39b), 40, 141. PACATOR ORBIS: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 163.

²⁴ Minerva: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 25a)–25c), 336a), 336b), 340, 348A, 406B. On two types, issued in 203, Caracalla is crowned by Minerva. These types, however, belong to the category 'virtues' since they propagate *virtus* in their legends (*RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 417a) and 417b)). With regard to another type, also issued in 203 and belonging to the categories 'virtues', it is not clear whether the emperor is crowned by Minerva or Roma (*RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 73).

²⁵ The extensive use of Liber and Hercules as native gods in Severus' representation can be considered an innovation. See Lichtenberger, *Severus Pius Augustus*, p. 99. See further Scheid, 'Déchiffrer des monnaies'; Rowan, *Under Divine Auspices*, pp. 71ff. See also above, pp. 112–113.

²⁶ *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 76 and 422. See further Lichtenberger, *Severus Pius Augustus*, p. 2 and pp. 51ff.

the year 204) showing Liber and Hercules together with a legend referring to the *ludi saeculares*.²⁷ Thereafter, they do not appear together on Caracalla's coinage. A coin type showing only Hercules can be dated to the period 205–207 while a coin type presenting only Liber is dated to the year 206.²⁸ According to Lichtenberger, the simultaneous issuance of two types representing Hercules and Liber separately could imply a shift in emphasis; their separate appearance might indicate that the importance of the representation of both gods as the native gods from Lepcis Magna diminished.²⁹ Whereas types showing an image of Hercules also appeared during Caracalla's sole reign, types presenting Liber were not minted after the issue of 206.³⁰ Considering that first representations of Liber and Hercules together disappeared from Caracalla's coinage, and then images of both gods appear separately on coins, before finally types displaying Liber were no longer minted, it seems that Severus' *di patrii* lost their attraction for Caracalla's coins.

This series of choices, however, does not imply that Caracalla distanced himself from Severus and his ideology. After all, Liber and Hercules also seem to have lost importance for Caracalla's father. On the coinage of Severus, both deities are represented together as well as separately on coin types dated before 204 or during 204 and on undated coins struck in honor of the *ludi saeculares*.³¹ After the *ludi saeculares*, both gods disappear from Severus' coinage. This simultaneous disappearance of joint representations of Hercules and Liber from both Severus' and Caracalla's coinage indicates a changing imperial ideology in which there was no more space left for the *di patrii*. This changing imperial ideology could reflect a declining importance of dynastic representation; the *di patrii*, after all, were family gods whose images could strengthen dynastic claims.³² Although the evidence does not allow us to present this ideological change as either Severus' or Caracalla's choice, it seems more likely that the senior Augustus had been pulling the strings.

²⁷ *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 74a), 74b), 418, 420, 421. Although these coin types do not belong to the category 'divine association' – because of their legend they belong to the category '*euergesia*' – they are important for the picture sketched here. See further Scheid, 'Déchiffrer des monnaies'.

²⁸ Hercules: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 430. Liber: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 85.

²⁹ Lichtenberger, *Severus Pius Augustus*, p. 56.

³⁰ In 211, a type showing a figure which might be Bacchus was struck. However, the figure's identification is by no means certain. See *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 182.

³¹ For Liber and Hercules on Severus' coins, see Lichtenberger, *Severus Pius Augustus*, pp. 43–54.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 59 and 89.

Besides Hercules and Liber, the chief god Jupiter and Aesculapius embellish one coin type each, minted in the period 198–210.³³

All gods mentioned above – Mars, Sol, Minerva, Liber, Hercules, Jupiter, Aesculapius – are also represented on Septimius Severus' coins. Thus, during the joint reign of Severus and Caracalla, no new deities (i.e. deities who did not appear on Severus' coins) appeared on Caracalla's coinage. This changed when Caracalla ruled alone.

In 212–217 the deities Venus, Vesta, Apollo, Diana, Pluto, Isis, and Serapis were introduced on Caracalla's coinage.³⁴ Representation of Venus, Vesta, Apollo, and Diana had appeared regularly on imperial coinage before the Severans and were also common on third-century imperial coinage.³⁵ Among these 'common deities', only Diana does not appear on Septimius Severus' coins. Isis and Serapis were more exceptional. Isis appeared for the first time on imperial coins during Hadrian's reign. Thereafter the goddess was represented on coins of Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius, Commodus, Caracalla and Claudius Gothicus.³⁶ Serapis appears on coins of Domitian, Hadrian, Commodus, Caracalla, Gordian III, Gallienus, and Claudius Gothicus.³⁷ Pluto's frequent appearance on Caracalla's coins of all

³³ Jupiter: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 156. Aesculapius: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 99. Aesculapius is probably depicted in the capacity of healing god, since Caracalla had problems with his health (*RIC* IV.1, p. 87). Health problems Caracalla: Cass. Dio 78.15.2–7 (ἐνοσεῖ μὲν γὰρ καὶ τῷ σώματι τὰ μὲν ἐμφανέσι τὰ δὲ καὶ ἄρρήτοις ἀρρωστήμασιν).

³⁴ All coin types showing Isis (see n. 36 and also pp. 239 and 243–244) and one type representing Vesta (*RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 271) have a military connotation too.

³⁵ See appendix two and three. Dio mentions Apollo (ὁ Ἀπόλλων ὁ Γράννος) also in relation to Caracalla (78.15.6). Possibly, Apollo is depicted on these coins in the capacity of healing god because of Caracalla's health problems. (*RIC* IV.1, p. 87). One coin type (*RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 537), dated to 213–214, shows Caracalla and Geta being crowned respectively by Victoria and Apollo; it belongs to the category 'dynastic representation'.

³⁶ Under Antoninus Pius, Isis appeared on a consecration coin type bearing the legend DIVA FAVSTINA (*RIC* III, Antoninus Pius, no. 197). The Isis-types of Marcus Aurelius are listed as 'uncertain' in the *RIC* (*RIC* III, Marcus Aurelius, nos. 1725 and 1726). *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 257a), 257b), 544; *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 217, 218.

³⁷ *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos 193, 194, 208, 244, 263a), 263b), 263c), 263d), 263e), 263f), 280a), 280b), 280c), 280d), 280e), 290, 497, 502, 505, 561a), 561b). *RIC* IV.3, Gordianus III, no. 30; *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 19 and 600 (see p. 287 with n. 93); *RIC* V.1, Claudius Gothicus, nos. 201 and 202. Caracalla's attention for Serapis (and for Aesculapius) is mentioned by Dio (78.15.6) whereas his relation with Isis is discussed in the *Historia Augusta* (H.A. Caracalla 9.10: *sacra Isidis Romam deportavit et templa ubique magnifica eidem deae fecit*). On Serapis and Caracalla, see Lichtenberger, *Severus Pius Augustus*, pp. 120–121; H.-P. l'Orange, *Apotheosis in ancient portraiture* (Oslo, 1947), pp. 82–83. For a general overview of the iconography of Serapis on cameos, carvings, gems, jewels and seals of the Greco-Roman period, see R. Veymiers, *Ἰλῆως τῷ φοροῦντι. Sérapis sur les gemmes et les bijoux antiques* (Brussels, 2009).



Image 22 Pluto (RIC IV.1, Caracalla, no. 261c)

denominations is remarkable (*image 22*).³⁸ Among all imperial coin types issued in the first, second, and third centuries, Pluto appears only on Caracalla's coins.³⁹ Interestingly, the iconography of these coin types parallels Caracalla's Serapis coins closely. Both deities are bearded and extend their right hand on the majority of types, while, out of all deities depicted on Caracalla's coins, only these two gods wear a *polos* (cylinder-shaped head covering) or possibly a *kalathos* (basket).⁴⁰ In addition, among the 17 coin types showing Pluto, twelve present the three-headed dog Cerberus.⁴¹ Cerberus was not only associated with the god of the underworld but was also a standard element of Serapis' iconography;⁴² statues as well as coins bearing portraits of Roman emperors depict Serapis together with Cerberus.⁴³ The other Pluto types show the Minotaur next to Pluto instead

³⁸ Corresponding *BMC* numbers: *BMCRE* V, nos. 96, 123, 124, 125, 163, 284, 297†, 302*, 309.

³⁹ RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 241, 242, 261a), 261b), 261c), 261d), 262a), 262b), 262c), 279, 279A, 542, 555a), 555b), 555c), 560, 569.

⁴⁰ There is one coin type (RIC IV.1, Caracalla, no. 214) which shows either the personification Indulgentia or Caracalla's mother Julia Domna wearing a *polos*.

⁴¹ RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 241, 242, 261a), 261b), 261c), 261d), 542, 555a), 555b), 555c), 560, 569. There is one Pluto type presenting an unclear image next to Pluto which could be Cerberus (RIC IV.1, Caracalla, no. 279).

⁴² W. Hornbostel, *Sarapis. Studien zur Überlieferungsgeschichte, den Erscheinungsformen und Wandlungen der Gestalt eines Gottes* (Leiden, 1973), pp. 91–94.

⁴³ LIMC 7.1 (lemma 'Sarapis'), pp. 670–671. The majority of Serapis coins mentioned in the LIMC stem from the first and second centuries A.D. (Vespasian, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius).

of Cerberus.⁴⁴ Although the depiction of Pluto together with the Minotaur seems unparalleled in other media,⁴⁵ the association of these two figures is far from strange, since according to the famous myth Minos, the Minotaur's stepfather, judged the shadows arriving in the underworld.

The iconographic parallels between Pluto and Serapis stemmed from the notoriety that Ptolemy I Soter had provided for (the cult of) the originally Egyptian bull-god Serapis.⁴⁶ Ptolemy I Soter wanted to introduce a cult in which both Egyptians and Greeks could participate in order to unite both parts of the population under one deity.⁴⁷ Both the Egyptian god Osiris and the Greek god Hades-Pluto stood at the basis of the Hellenistic Serapis:⁴⁸

Ptolemy Soter saw in a dream the colossal statue of Pluto in Sinopê, not knowing nor having ever seen how it looked, and in his dream the statue bade him convey it with all speed to Alexandria. He had no information and no means of knowing where the statue was situated, but as he related the vision to his friends there was discovered for him a much travelled man by the name of Sosibius, who said that he had seen in Sinopê just such a great statue as the king thought he saw. Ptolemy, therefore, sent Soteles and Dionysius, who, after a considerable time and with great difficulty, and not without the help of divine providence, succeeded in stealing the statue and bringing it away. When it had been conveyed to Egypt and exposed to view, Timotheus, the expositor of sacred law, and Manetho of Sebennytus, and their associates, conjectured that it was the statue of Pluto, basing their conjecture on the Cerberus and the serpent with it, and they convinced Ptolemy that it was the statue of none other of the gods but Serapis. It certainly did not bear this name when it came for Sinope, but, after it had been conveyed to Alexandria, it took to itself the name which Pluto bears among the Egyptians, that of Serapis. Moreover, since Heracleitus the physical philosopher says, "The same are Hades and Dionysus, to honour whom they rage and rave", people are inclined to come to this opinion. In fact, those who insist that the body is called Hades, since the soul is, as it were, deranged and

⁴⁴ *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 262a), 262b), 262c), 279A. According to Hornbostel, depictions of Serapis together with Cerberus on coin types listed in the *BMC* are confused with images of Minos together with the Minotaur (Hornbostel, *Serapis*, p. 282 n. 5). However, when the depiction of Cerberus on *BMCRE* no. 124 is compared with depictions of the Minotaur in the same catalogue there are marked iconographic differences between these two images. Therefore it seems highly unlikely that, instead of the exceptional Minotaur, Cerberus is in fact represented on these *RIC*-types.

⁴⁵ The combination of Pluto and the Minotaur does not appear in the *LIMC*.

⁴⁶ The most widely disseminated hypothesis with regard to Serapis' origin: *LIMC* 7.1 (lemma 'Sarapis').

⁴⁷ Hornbostel, *Sarapis*, p. 18; Jones, *A Dictionary of Ancient Roman Coins*, p. 286.

⁴⁸ Hornbostel, *Sarapis*, p. 18.

inebriate when it is in the body, are too frivolous in their use of allegory. It is better to identify Osiris with Dionysus and Serapis with Osiris, who received this appellation at the time when he changed his nature. For this reason Serapis is a god of all peoples in common, even as Osiris is; and this they who have participated in the holy rites well know.⁴⁹

The assimilation and identification with other deities was thus inherent to Serapis' syncretic nature. In addition to his identification with Pluto,⁵⁰ he adopted capacities and features from other deities such as Zeus/Jupiter, Ammon, Asklepios/Aesculapius, Dionysos/Bacchus, Poseidon/Neptune, Helios/Sol, and Herakles/Hercules.⁵¹

The most obvious interpretation of Caracalla's Pluto types would then account for the combination of the iconographic parallel between Serapis and Pluto and the exceptionality of the Pluto types, which seems to imply a special significance.⁵² After all, an interpretation based only on Serapis' and Pluto's relationship does not explain Pluto's sudden emergence, whereas an interpretation starting only from Pluto's exceptionality does no justice to the connection with Serapis.

⁴⁹ Plutarch, *Moralia* 5, *De Iside et Osiride* 28: Πτολεμαῖος δ' ὁ Σωτὴρ ὅναρ εἶδε τὸν ἐν Σινώπῃ τοῦ Πλούτωνος κολοσσόν, οὐκ ἐπιστάμενος οὐδ' ἑωρακώς πρότερον οἷος τὴν μορφήν ἦν, κελεύοντα κομίσαι τὴν ταχίστην αὐτὸν εἰς Ἀλεξάνδρειαν. ἀγνοοῦντι δ' αὐτῷ καὶ ἀποροῦντι ποῦ καθίδρυται καὶ διηγουμένῳ τοῖς φίλοις τὴν ὕψιν εὑρεθὴ πολυπλανῆς ἄνθρωπος ὄνομα Σωσίβιος ἐν Σινώπῃ φάμενος ἑωρακέναι τοιοῦτον κολοσσόν οἷον ὁ βασιλεὺς ἰδεῖν ἔδοξεν. ἔπεμψεν οὖν Σωτέλῃ καὶ Διονύσιον, οἱ χρόνῳ πολλῷ καὶ μόλις, οὐκ ἄνευ μέντοι θείας προνοίας, ἦγαγον ἐκκλέψαντες. ἐπεὶ δὲ κομισθεὶς ὤφθη, συμβαλόντες οἱ περὶ Τιμόθεον τὸν ἐξηγητὴν καὶ Μανέθωνα τὸν Σεβεννύτην Πλούτωνος δὴ ἄγαλμα τῷ Κερβέρῳ τεκμαιρόμενοι καὶ τῷ δράκοντι, πείθουσι τὸν Πτολεμαῖον ὡς ἐτέρου θεῶν οὐδενὸς ἀλλὰ Σαράπιδός ἐστιν. οὐ γὰρ ἐκεῖθεν οὕτως ὀνομαζόμενος ἦκεν, ἀλλ' εἰς Ἀλεξάνδρειαν κομισθεὶς τὸ παρ' Αἰγυπτίοις ὄνομα τοῦ Πλούτωνος ἐκτήσατο τὸν Σάραπιν. καὶ μέντοι Ἡρακλείτου τοῦ φυσικοῦ λέγοντος, "Αἰδης καὶ Διόνυσος ὡτὸς ὅτε μαινόμενοι καὶ ληναῖζουσιν," εἰς ταύτην ὑπάγουσι τὴν δόξαν. οἱ γὰρ ἀξιούντες Ἀἰδην λέγεσθαι τὸ σῶμα τῆς ψυχῆς οἷον παραφρονούσης καὶ μεθυούσης ἐν αὐτῷ, γλίσχρως ἀλληγοροῦσι. βέλτιον δὲ τὸν Ὅσιριν εἰς ταῦτ' ἀνάγειν τῷ Διονύσῳ, τῷ τ' Ὅσίριδι τὸν Σάραπιν, ὅτε τὴν φύσιν μετέβαλε, ταύτης τυχόντι τῆς προσσηγορίας. διὸ πᾶσι κοινὸς Σαράπης ἐστὶ, ὡς δὴ τὸν Ὅσιριν οἱ τῶν ἱερῶν μεταλαβόντες ἴσασιν. See further Hornbostel, *Sarapis*, p. 18.

⁵⁰ *LIMC* 7.1 (lemma 'Sarapis'), pp. 666–667.

⁵¹ Hornbostel, *Sarapis*, pp. 21–24.

⁵² It might be argued that the editors of the *RIC* simply identified Serapis wrongly. This, however, can be repudiated immediately. There is a marked iconographic difference on Caracalla's coins between the *RIC*'s images identified as Pluto and depictions designated as Serapis; Serapis is always represented standing, whereas Pluto is always seated. This difference contradicts the conclusion that one and the same deity appears on all types. Moreover, the types depicting both deities were minted in the same phase of Caracalla's reign, his sole rule. This also points away from this explanation.

Both deities, Pluto and Serapis, were linked to grain.⁵³ The iconographic mark that identified Serapis is the *kalathos* with corn ears and on Commodus' coins Serapis appears in the function of protector of the transport of Egyptian corn.⁵⁴ Pluto was the brother of Ceres, the grain-goddess who had mothered his wife Proserpina. Moreover, Hades, the more common Greek counterpart for Roman Pluto, had also a euphemistic connotation; he appeared as a benevolent god who provided the people plentifully with goods from within the earth. In view of the link between both deities, their connection with grain, Serapis' Egyptian origin, and his function on Commodus' coins, the Pluto types could refer to grain from Egypt.

The extraordinary appearance of Pluto, however, is still not explained fully. After all, Serapis types by themselves might have been sufficient to evoke Egyptian grain. As already mentioned, the peculiar presence of Pluto must have carried special significance and might thus connote a particular event. Since Pluto appears only on coin types issued during Caracalla's sole rule, a connection with the *Constitutio Antoniniana*, the most remarkable event that took place during his sole reign, seems likely. Support for this suggestion comes from L'Orange's observation that in the year of the *Constitutio Antoniniana* Serapis appeared for the first time as an independent type on Roman coins.⁵⁵ A speculative, but at first sight coherent hypothesis, then, would be that the Pluto types promoted one positive consequence of the *Constitutio Antoniniana* for Rome (the place where these coin types were minted), namely increased import of corn as a form of tax from Egypt. The famous decree of citizenship would have forced Egypt to produce more taxes, and thus more grain, after its enactment in 212. The Isis types issued in the year 215 (the year that Caracalla went to Egypt) probably reinforced the messages of the Pluto types. On all three types, the Egyptian goddess Isis presents corn-ears to Caracalla.

This hypothesis, the relationship with the *Constitutio Antoniniana*, not only explains the remarkable Pluto types but also the almost simultaneous introduction of two Egyptian gods and one peculiar Roman deity on Caracalla's coin types. The presupposed thematic coherence between these three deities reveals unity in Caracalla's visual program as propagated through coins. Moreover, despite the paucity of literary and judicial

⁵³ Mattingly argues in the *BMCRE* that Caracalla promoted Serapis' cult with special attention to its chthonic aspects. The iconography representing Pluto with Cerberus (as well as Minos with the Minotaur) fits in this framework (*BMCRE* V, p. xl).

⁵⁴ Hekster, *Commodus*, p. 110.

⁵⁵ L'Orange, *Apotheosis in Ancient Portraiture*, p. 82.

evidence on the *Constitutio Antoniniana*, inscriptions and papyri show that the edict did impact daily life; for instance, the *nomen gentile* 'Aurelius' appeared much more frequently after 212.⁵⁶ In such a context, the Pluto types might well refer to this important edict.

However, it is questionable whether many Romans would have connected these Pluto types actively with the *Constitutio Antoniniana*. That would then also be the strongest argument against the above presented hypothesis. After all, the propagation of a message that was difficult to understand was probably not very effective. It is therefore worthwhile to look for other explanations for the Pluto types. Perhaps the propagation of coin types displaying the god of the underworld may have had a connection with Geta's death in 212 (though it is doubtful that Caracalla would have wanted to stress this). Alternatively, they could be interpreted as associating Pluto (the ruler of the underworld) with the emperor (the ruler of the world). Finally, they might be simply a reflection of Caracalla's predilection for Egypt and Egyptian deities; Pluto can, after all, be linked to Serapis and to Osiris. These last two interpretations imply strong personal religious motives to have played a part in the propagation of Pluto on Caracalla's coins. This would also apply to the hypothesis that the issuance of the Pluto types and the promulgation of the *Constitutio Antoniniana* were connected to each other; the *constitutio* may also have stemmed from a personal religious motive of the emperor.⁵⁷ Moreover, it is worth pointing out that the aforementioned other interpretations of the Pluto types are either based only on the connection between Pluto and Serapis or only on Pluto's exceptionality.

Not only were deities who had been absent from coins issued in the period 198–210 introduced on types struck during Caracalla's sole rule, but gods present on types struck in 198–210 also disappeared under Caracalla's sole rule. Minerva and, as already mentioned, Liber, both of whom had played prominent roles under (a part of) Severus' reign, vanish from coin types issued in the period 212–217. Caracalla might have wanted to create his own visual program.

Of course there was also continuity in references to deities on coins struck in both periods; Jupiter, Hercules, Mars, Sol, and Aesculapius

⁵⁶ New citizens customarily adopted the *nomen gentile* of the person who provided them with their new status. Accordingly, many new citizens adopted the emperor's name Aurelius after the *Constitutio Antoniniana* was proclaimed. See e.g. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* 6.2799 and *Papyrus Dura* 98. See further Hekster, *Rome and its Empire*, p. 50.

⁵⁷ See above, n. 11.

appear on coins from both periods.⁵⁸ Emphasis on Mars remained particularly constant during both periods. The majority of coin types referring to Mars do not show the god in a specific capacity; only during Caracalla's sole reign do two types refer to Mars Propugnator and one type to Mars Victor.⁵⁹ The god's connection with war might explain the continuous attention to Mars; throughout his whole reign, from 198 to 217, Caracalla celebrated the military. Although they were common forms of propaganda, the emphasis on Minerva Victrix during Severus' and Caracalla's joint reign and on Venus Victrix during the latter's sole reign could also have expressed devotion to his soldiers.

Besides types depicting gods, Caracalla issued coins with an image of himself as a priest in both periods too.⁶⁰ Some of these types also belong to the category 'dynastic representation'.⁶¹ Other coin types without images of deities, but nevertheless conveying a divine association theme, present the legend PROVIDENTIAE DEORVM and a depiction of Providentia.⁶² These types, however, were only issued during Caracalla's sole reign.

To sum up, when we compare the coin types presenting a divine association theme struck during Caracalla's joint reign with the same kind

⁵⁸ In the period 198–210 Jupiter appears as Jupiter Sospitator on Caracalla's coinage (*RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 156), whereas Jupiter Conservator (*RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 301) and Jupiter Victor (*RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 200) appear on coin types minted during Caracalla's sole reign (next to types on which Jupiter appears in no specific capacity). Four coin types present Aesculapius together with Caracalla in military dress and therefore connote military associations too (*RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 270a)–270d)).

⁵⁹ MARTI PROPVGNATORI: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 235 and 307. MARS VICTOR: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 306.

⁶⁰ These images often accompany references to *vota suscepta* (*RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 68, 150, 151, 179–181, 478a), 478b)), *vota soluta* (*RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 204, 205, 441A), or *vota publica* (*RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 178, 513, 517, 523). Caracalla is also represented as a priest on a coin type belonging to a different category than 'divine association'. This type, issued in the period 199–200, bears the legend RESTITVTOR VRBIS and belongs therefore to the category 'restitutor messages' (*RIC* IV.1 Caracalla, no. 41). Another type referring to the *ludi saeculares* in the legend (issued in 204) probably portrays the emperor while he is sacrificing (*RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 418).

⁶¹ See p. 247 with n. 106. Three types, struck in 209 and 210, present Caracalla and Geta together as priests (*RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 444, 452a), 452b. Concerning *RIC* 444, it is not clear whether Septimius Severus is depicted on this type). Ironically, on *RIC* 452a) and 452b) the figure of Concordia is standing behind the two brothers. On another coin type, issued in 208, Septimius Severus is shown in priestly dress whereas Caracalla and Geta are seated on a platform (*RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 106). During Caracalla's sole reign, one coin type on which Caracalla appears as a priest has a dynastic connotation too (*RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 250). On this coin type, minted in 214, Julia Domna, Caracalla's mother, is visible (see p. 248).

⁶² *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 227, 309a), 309b), 511a)–511d), 514, 519, 535, 572a), 572b), 575a)–576.

of coin types minted during Caracalla's sole reign, continuity as well as change emerges. Change in Caracalla's religious propaganda encompasses mainly the emperor's introduction of seven new deities on his coinage. The latter, in combination with the PROVIDENTIAE DEORVM coins that were solely minted in the period 212–217, confirms the importance that Caracalla attached to the pantheon as a whole particularly in the period 212–217.⁶³

2.2 Military representation

As with the divine associations on coins from both phases of Caracalla's rule, coin types with a military theme, the second largest representational category, also manifest continuity and change. In both periods, numerous coins promoted victory by displaying the goddess Victoria, naming VICTORIA in the legend, or both. Sometimes specific victories are mentioned. Several military coin types from the first phase of Caracalla's rule refer to the victory over the Parthians.⁶⁴ These coin types must have publicized how Caracalla joined in the military success of his father, since Caracalla's own ambiguous expedition against the Parthians took place toward the end of his sole reign. The number of attested types referring to *Victoria Parthica* diminishes under Caracalla's sole rule. These types, dated to 217 and more generally to the period 213–217, thus point to Caracalla's own battle against the Parthians.⁶⁵ The victory in Britain was propagated on coin types issued toward the end of the first phase of the emperor's reign, while VICTORIA GERMANICA, probably reflecting the victory over the Germans in 213, appears only on two types struck in the second phase.⁶⁶ That specific victories were propagated only during the period in which they were achieved illustrates how imperial power was displayed on coins

⁶³ The 'religious' coin types that are issued in the year 211, dated to the periods 209–212 and 210–213, or others roughly dated to some period or other, present the same imagery as the 'religious' coin types already discussed. Only the goddess Ceres was new and Mars was represented in more different ways. Besides his capacity as Mars Propugnator, he appeared as Mars Pacator and Mars Ultor. Caracalla as a priest as well as PROVIDENTIA DEORVM were also present on these coin types. Thus, these types do not distort the general picture.

⁶⁴ RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 78, 144a), 144b), 168A.

⁶⁵ RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 297a), 297b), 297c), 297d), 297e), 298a), 298b), 299a), 299b), 299c), 299d), 299e), 314a), 314b), 315a), 315b). See above p. 84.

⁶⁶ VICTORIA BRIT: RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 169, 172, 172A, 173, 174. VICTORIA GERMANICA: RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 237 and 316. See Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle*, p. 162.

not only to legitimize the emperor's power but also to inform the inhabitants of the Roman Empire about the successes of their ruler.

Just as imperial coins issued in both 198–210 as well as 212–217 communicated the theme of victory, so imagery of the emperor in military dress, with military attributes, in a triumphal *quadriga*, or defeating an enemy – in other words common military representation of the emperor – appears on coins from both periods.⁶⁷ This continuity shows the importance of presenting the emperor as military leader (see 2.2). The representation of Caracalla as a general, however, changed between joint and sole rule: *adventus* and *profectio* types were only issued during the joint reign.⁶⁸ As we have already seen above, the imagery on Caracalla's types communicates aggressiveness by depicting Caracalla trampling enemies or hurling javelins at foes. Caracalla's alleged identification with his soldiers might help to explain this.⁶⁹

Also issued only during the joint reign were several types depicting a galley (sometimes in combination with the legend ADVENTVS AVGVSTORVM) and a type bearing the legend TRAIECTVS PONTIF TR P XI COS III and illustrating a bridge and soldiers.⁷⁰ These galleys and bridge might allude to actual military activities such as the passage to Britain or the East.

Solely in the period 212–217, some types were issued that emphasized *fides militum* and *concordia militum*.⁷¹ Whether these messages reflected increasing tensions within the army or expressed commonplace propaganda is hard to tell. Types showing the emperor in military dress with his foot on a crocodile and Isis presenting corn-ears to him were minted only in 215.⁷² These types must evoke Egypt; the suppressed crocodile could

⁶⁷ Two coin types issued in 210 and presenting Caracalla together with Geta in military dress with military attributes (without a decisive legend) also belong to the category dynastic representation (*RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 453a) and 453b)). In addition, one coin type minted in 207 and eight coin types struck in 215 belong to the category military representation as well as divine association: these types present Caracalla in military dress together with a deity but without a decisive legend (*RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 96, 257a), 257b), 270a), 270b), 270c), 270d), 271, 544).

⁶⁸ *Adventus*: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 56, 57, 58, 120, 121. *Profectio*: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 107, 108, 431, 432, 433, 438, 439, 440.

⁶⁹ See above, p. 75.

⁷⁰ Galley: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 57, 58, 85A, 98, 120, 121, 426a), 429a), 429b), 429c), 437a), 437b), 437c). See also above, p. 73. TRAIECTVS PONTIF TR P XI COS III: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 441.

⁷¹ *Fides Militum*: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 266, 267. *Concordia militum*: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 232 and 233.

⁷² *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 257a), 257b), and 544. See further p. 241.

point to the suppression of riots in Alexandria in 215.⁷³ Finally, Isis presenting corn to the emperor might share the Pluto types' special significance, as is argued above.⁷⁴

On the basis of the coin types belonging to the two largest representational categories, it is possible to conclude that the broad outlines of Caracalla's religious and military representation show much continuity between joint and sole reign. Among coins featuring divine association, emphasis on deities and the representation of Caracalla as a priest remained common in both periods. The same holds true in military representation: types continued to promote victories and the emperor as military leader. However, apart from this continuity on the surface, remarkable modifications characterize the messages on coin types from these representational categories, especially after Severus' death. As old types disappeared, not only were types circulated that did not appear during the first phase of Caracalla's emperorship, but other types emerged that were never or rarely seen before on any imperial coinage.

2.3 *Saeculum aureum and virtues*

Alongside divine association and military representation, the category *saeculum aureum* (and the category 'virtues') occupies a prominent place within third century representations of power in general (see figure 1, chapter four and chapter five) and within the representation of Caracalla's power from 198 to 210 (see figure 33). Whereas *saeculum aureum* was propagated during the period 198–210 through a large number of types and various messages, both the number of types and the diversity of messages decreased sharply in 212–217 (see figures 33 and 34). For Caracalla's joint reign 50 coin types with a *saeculum aureum* theme are attested, while only 17 types issued during Caracalla's sole reign bear such a theme. During Severus'

⁷³ See *BMCRE* V, p. ccvi. See further P. Benoit and J. Schwarz, "Caracalla et les troubles d'Alexandrie en 215 après J.C.", *EPap* 7 (1948), pp. 17–33.

⁷⁴ On the coin types excluded from the above analysis of the types from Caracalla's joint and sole reigns (i.e. coin types that are dated to 211 and to the periods 209–212 and 210–213, completely undated, or otherwise roughly dated to a period), Victoria plays the largest role as well. Moreover, these types display no imagery or legends otherwise neglected by Caracalla. Coins dated to the period 210–213 propagated the emperor's *adventus* and *profectio*, while one of these types proclaims *fides exercitus*. The emperor in military dress and with military attributes appears on both the *adventus* and *profectio* types and on types whose legend consists of standard imperial titulature.

and Caracalla's joint rule *fides publica*,⁷⁵ *saeculi felicitas*,⁷⁶ *spes publica*,⁷⁷ *securitas (orbis/publica/imperii)*,⁷⁸ (*imperii*) *felicitas*,⁷⁹ *laetitia temporum*,⁸⁰ *salus (generis humani)*,⁸¹ *bonus eventus*,⁸² *concordia*,⁸³ *libertas*,⁸⁴ *felicia temporum*,⁸⁵ and *fortunae felici*⁸⁶ were propagated on coinage depicting Caracalla. *Securitas*,⁸⁷ *salus*,⁸⁸ *libertas*,⁸⁹ *pax*,⁹⁰ and *felicitas temporum*⁹¹ also appear on coin types minted during Caracalla's sole reign. From 198 to 210, however, emphasis lay on *felicitas*, while *libertas* was emphasized most on coin types from the period 212–217.⁹² Remarkably, all 12 coin types propagating *libertas* were issued in the year 213. This peculiarity could have alluded to Geta's demise, or, in other words, to Caracalla's successful attempt to liberate the Roman world from his purportedly tyrannical brother. Another possible explanation for the issuance of the twelve *libertas* types in one year would be that these types promoted the *Constitutio Antoniniana*, passed one year earlier.⁹³

⁷⁵ RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 24a), 24b), 24A, 330A, 334.

⁷⁶ RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 25A, 128.

⁷⁷ RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 26a), 26b), 28, 46a), 46b), 330B, 333, 338a), 338b), 341, 406A.

⁷⁸ *Securitas*: RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 26A, 29, 92, 93. *Securitas publica*: RIC IV.1, Caracalla, no. 332. *Securitas imperii*: RIC IV.1, Caracalla, no. 168. *Securitas orbis*: RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 43, 44a), 44b), 351a), 351b).

⁷⁹ *Felicitas*: RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 34, 35, 127, 339, 348. *Imperii felicitas*: RIC IV.1, Caracalla, no. 331.

⁸⁰ RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 133, 157.

⁸¹ *Salus*: RIC IV.1, Caracalla, no. 82. *Salus generis humani*: RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 42a), 42b), 42c), 350. For more on Caracalla's *salus generis humani* coins, see above, pp. 216–218.

⁸² *Bonus eventus*: RIC IV.1, Caracalla, no. 33.

⁸³ RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 111, 116a), 116b). Coin types propagating *concordia Augustorum* belong to the category 'dynastic representation'.

⁸⁴ RIC IV.1, Caracalla, no. 161.

⁸⁵ RIC IV.1, Caracalla, no. 153.

⁸⁶ RIC IV.1, Caracalla, no. 154.

⁸⁷ RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 492A, 494. There are also coin types propagating *securitati perpetuae*; these types, however, belong to the category 'aeternitas messages' and will be discussed on p. 248.

⁸⁸ RIC IV.1, Caracalla, no. 196.

⁸⁹ RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 209a), 209b), 209c), 209d), 498a), 498b), 498c), 498d), 498e), 498f), 498g), 503.

⁹⁰ RIC IV.1, Caracalla, no. 268.

⁹¹ RIC IV.1, Caracalla, no. 233A.

⁹² From these seventeen types with a *saeculum aureum* theme struck in the period 212–217, twelve emphasize *libertas*.

⁹³ BMCRE V, p. cci. The Pluto types might also have a connection with the *Constitutio Antoniniana* (see above, pp. 239–240). The coin types which are either dated to 211, or dated to the periods 209–212 and 210–213, or roughly/possibly dated to a period present no messages deviant from the messages propagated by the coins mentioned above; *pax*,

In the category 'virtues', the number of coin types propagating specific virtues also declined sharply during the sole reign (see figure 34). Forty-five types presenting the emperor's virtues were issued between 198 and 210, whereas only two such types, issued in 212 and 214, appeared in Caracalla's sole reign. In the period 198–210, *iustitia*,⁹⁴ *virtus*,⁹⁵ *indulgentia*,⁹⁶ *liberalitas*,⁹⁷ *providentia*,⁹⁸ and *aequitas (publica)*⁹⁹ were propagated. The *indulgentia* types were exceptional in that they bear the legend INDVLGENTIA AVGG IN CARTH, with depictions of the goddess Dea Caestis. This 'Carthaginian' indulgence was propagated in the name of both Augusti, Severus and Caracalla.¹⁰⁰ It is probable that these coins reflect some specific favor bestowed upon Carthage, such as the grant of *ius Italicum* to the city or an imperial donation for the building of an aqueduct, since water is depicted on the coin type.¹⁰¹ Given the local character of the messages on these coins, which would probably not have appealed to every inhabitant of the Roman Empire, it is possible that they were intended for a specifically 'Africa-minded' audience.¹⁰² Septimius Severus' pedigree might have played a part here. On the other hand, the emperor seems to have attached the most importance to *virtus* in this period: this military virtue appears on 18 out of 45 types that propagate virtues minted during Severus' and Caracalla's joint rule, thus confirming the ancient authors' image of the emperor trying to legitimize his power by putting emphasis on his military qualities.¹⁰³ The two coin types promoting virtues struck in 212 and 214 stress the emperor's *virtus* and his *liberalitas*.¹⁰⁴ Because so few coin types emphasizing virtues were issued

concordia, securitas, salus, felicitas, libertas, fides, and spes embellish these types, all in approximately equal numbers.

⁹⁴ RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 331A, 335.

⁹⁵ RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 50, 51, 73, 112, 117a), 117b), 147, 148, 149, 155, 175, 176, 177, 354, 409, 417a), 417b), 456, 458.

⁹⁶ RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 130a), 130b), 131a) 131b), 132, 415a), 415b), 415c), 415d), 418A.

⁹⁷ RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 134a), 134b), 135, 136a), 136b), 158, 159, 160 (possibly ancient forgery), 416, 430A.

⁹⁸ RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 164, 165.

⁹⁹ *Aequitas*: RIC IV.1, Caracalla, no. 31. *Aequitas publica*: RIC IV.1, Caracalla, no. 114.

¹⁰⁰ Because of this legend these coin types are assigned not to the representational category 'divine association' but to the category 'virtues'.

¹⁰¹ Lichtenberger, *Severus Pius Augustus*, pp. 104–105. For the grant of *ius Italicum* to Carthage, see Birley, *Septimius Severus*, p. 146.

¹⁰² Lichtenberger, *Severus Pius Augustus*, p. 108.

¹⁰³ As discussed in chapter four, Maximinus Thrax had not issued coins propagating his *virtus*; it is possible that this equestrian emperor did not feel the need to emphasize qualities he already possessed by nature. See above, p. 170.

¹⁰⁴ *Virtus*: RIC IV.1, Caracalla, no. 198. *Liberalitas*: RIC IV.1, Caracalla, no. 527.

between 212 and 217, it is impossible to demonstrate continuity and change in the propagation of particular virtues throughout both phases of Caracalla's reign.¹⁰⁵

2.4 Other categories

In comparison with coin types propagating divine association, military representation, *saeculum aureum* and virtues, fewer types from both phases of Caracalla's rule feature 'dynastic representation', '*aeternitas* messages', 'geographical messages', '*restitutor* messages', 'elevation', 'non-specific representation' and 'unica' (see figures 33 and 34). In the categories 'dynastic representation' and '*aeternitas* messages', we can discern the same diachronic change as the categories '*saeculum aureum*' and 'virtues' underwent. Contrasting with types from Severus' and Caracalla's joint reign, fewer coin types presenting a dynastic or *aeternitas* message were minted during Caracalla's sole reign (see figures 33 and 34). In addition to this decline in the number of types, the dynastic and *aeternitas* messages grew less diverse in the second phase of Caracalla's rule, even as different messages were propagated during Caracalla's joint and sole reign.

As for dynastic representation, coin types propagating various dynastic messages were issued from 198–210. They either emphasize harmony between Caracalla and his father Septimius Severus, refer to Caracalla's brother Geta and Caracalla's wife Plautilla, or propagate *nobilitas*, *princeps iuventutis*, and *iuvēta imperii*.¹⁰⁶ During Caracalla's sole rule, only two types communicating a dynastic message were issued; one, dated to 213–214, emphasizes the feigned *concordia* between Caracalla and his brother, while the other type propagates harmony between the emperor

¹⁰⁵ The coin types dated to 211, to the period 210–213, or roughly dated to a period present the virtues *liberalitas*, *aequitas*, *virtus*, *indulgentia*, and *iustitia*. One *indulgentia* type dated between 210 and 213 displays the remarkable legend INDVLG FECVNDAE (RIC IV.1, Caracalla, no. 214), which must refer to an imperial woman (probably Julia Domna, since Plautilla had by that time been exiled by Caracalla or already murdered, see RIC IV.1, p. 87 and below, n. 110).

¹⁰⁶ Connection/harmony with family: RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 17, 29B, 38, 45, 53, 62, 66, 67, 73A, 75, 106, 123, 124A), 124b), 137, 139, 152, 163A, 345, 349, 422A, 444, 452a), 452b), 453a), 453b) Some of these types have a military or a religious connotation too and are thus also considered within the categories 'military representation' or 'divine association'. See also below, p. 241 and p. 243 n. 67. *Nobilitas*: RIC IV.1, Caracalla, no. 162 (possibly irregular). *Princeps iuventutis*: RIC IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 38A, 140. *Iuvēta imperii*: RIC IV.1, Caracalla, no. 24B.

and his mother Julia Domna.¹⁰⁷ The type presenting an image of Julia Domna and Caracalla sacrificing in front of the temple of Vesta communicates a message which does not occur on dynastic types struck during the joint reign.¹⁰⁸

In the category *aeternitas* messages, in 198–210 attention was primarily focused on *concordia aeterna*.¹⁰⁹ The majority of these coin types aim to communicate harmony between Septimius Severus and Julia Domna, while only a few point to (non-existing) harmony between Caracalla and Geta, as well as concord between Caracalla and his wife Plautilla.¹¹⁰ The rest propagates *pax aeterna*, *aeternitas imperii* (together with an image of Septimius Severus and Caracalla), *Roma aeterna*, and *victoria aeterna*.¹¹¹ Coin types stemming from the period 212–217, however, proclaim only *securitas perpetua*.¹¹² The multitude of types propagating concord between Septimius Severus and Julia Domna from the first phase of Caracalla's rule suggests that Septimius Severus was influencing Caracalla's coins.¹¹³

The widest discrepancies among the categories of coin types issued during the joint reign as compared to Caracalla's sole reign occur within the categories 'restitutor messages', 'elevation', 'non-specific representation', and 'unica'. Whereas no types presenting the emperor as *restitutor* or as elevated beyond the human ranks were minted in the period 212–217, coin types belonging to the categories 'non-specific representation' and 'unica' were only issued during the last phase of Caracalla's reign (see figures 33

¹⁰⁷ Caracalla and Geta: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 537. Since Geta was already dead when this coin type was issued, it is likely that either the mint masters made a mistake or the *RIC* dates it wrongly. Caracalla and Julia Domna: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 250. The latter type also depicts other figures, such as a woman and a child.

¹⁰⁸ This type is also considered within the category 'divine association'. The coin types that are dated to 211 or only roughly dated propagate either the harmony between Caracalla and Geta or *IVVENTA IMPERII*, or else present Caracalla as *Severi pii Augusti filius* (no. 413).

¹⁰⁹ *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 36, 52, 59a), 59b), 59c), 60, 61, 125a), 125b).

¹¹⁰ After her father Plautianus had fallen into disgrace with the Severi, Plautilla was sent into exile by Caracalla and later was murdered.

¹¹¹ *Pax aeterna*: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 138. *Aeternitas imperii*: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 32, 122. *Roma aeterna*: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 143, 143A. *Victoria aeterna*: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 47a), 47b), 48.

¹¹² *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 309A, 536a), 536b), 573a), 573b). Eight coin types dated to the period 210–213 present the legend *SECVRITATI PERPETVAE* (*RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 229a), 229b), 512a), 512b), 512c), 512d), 515, 520) and one coin type dated probably to the years 198–199 (*RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 23) bears the legend *VICT AETERN*.

¹¹³ The majority of the *Aeternitas* coin types excluded from the above analysis propagate *SECVRITATI PERPETVAE*, whereas one of these coin types bears the legend *VICT AETERN*.

and 34). As to the specific messages spread by the four coin types belonging to the category 'restitutor messages', all coin types bear the legend RESTITVTOR VRBIS. The image that goes together with this legend on three coin types is a depiction of Roma holding military attributes (Victoria, spear, shield). The remaining type shows an image of Caracalla wearing a military dress and making a sacrifice.¹¹⁴ With regard to the coin types elevating the emperor, one coin type bears the legend FORTVNA REDVX, which can be associated with the safe return of the emperor to Rome, and two types present the emperor as FVNDATOR PACIS.¹¹⁵ Why, then, did Caracalla stop issuing coin types with the legends RESTITVTOR VRBIS, FORTVNA REDVX, and FVNDATOR PACIS during his sole rule? Septimius Severus, for his part, had issued many coin types bearing one of these three legends. This supports the conjecture that Septimius Severus decided Caracalla's coin types issued during the joint reign, while Caracalla made his own ideological choices after Severus died.

In comparison with the coins from the categories 'restitutor messages' and 'elevation', coin types communicating non-specific and unique messages were only minted in 212–217 (see figure 34). The two types presenting non-specific imperial representation bear a legend consisting of standard imperial titulature and portray the emperor holding a branch and a baton.¹¹⁶ Within the category 'unica', 30 coin types communicate deviating messages. One bears the legend GENIO SENATVS and depicts the senate's *genius*.¹¹⁷ Caracalla may have issued this remarkable type in order to satisfy senators. After all, if the attitude towards Caracalla which is expressed by his senatorial biographers accurately represents the feelings of the other contemporary senators, senatorial antipathy towards Severus' son was pervasive.

¹¹⁴ Depiction of Roma: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 142, 166, 167. Depiction of Caracalla: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 41. Coin types which are dated to the period 210–213 or are roughly dated bear also the legend RESTITVTOR VRBIS and show an image of Roma with military attributes (*RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 228, 461, 475).

¹¹⁵ FORTVNA REDVX: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 37. The other nine *Fortuna Redux* coin types were all minted in the year 211 and refer to the return from Britain of Caracalla and Geta. FVNDATOR PACIS: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 129 (possibly hybrid), 154A. Nine coin types referring to *Fortuna Redux* in the legend were minted in the year 211 (*RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 189, 190a), 190b), 479a), 479b), 485a), 485b), 488, 489).

¹¹⁶ *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 246, 247. The legends of two other coin types, which are both undated, consist also of standard imperial titulature and show the image of a wreath (*RIC* IV.1 Caracalla, nos. 357a), 357b)).

¹¹⁷ *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 234.

Six other types depict an elephant together with standard imperial titulature in the legend.¹¹⁸ This elephant appears only on Caracalla's and Geta's coin types, and not on coin types of other third-century emperors.¹¹⁹ Four of Caracalla's elephant types were minted in the year 212, the same year when Geta issued both of his elephant types. These elephant types could allude to public games, or else they might hint at the imperial interest in mass entertainments.¹²⁰ An elephant, however, does not necessarily evoke games; from the time of Augustus onward, the elephant had symbolized imperial power.¹²¹ Therefore, the elephant types could also advertise imperial authority in general.

The remaining 23 types present a legend consisting of standard imperial titulature and an image of a radiated lion holding a thunderbolt in his jaws.¹²² This radiated lion appeared later on coins issued by Philippus I, Philippus II, Gallienus (see p. 297), Aurelian, and Probus. Caracalla and these other five emperors led campaigns in the east. Since the lion was the symbol of the sun in the east, the lion could refer to an eastern sun god.¹²³ Moreover, the radiate crown refers to the sun and also pleads in favor of interpreting the lion as a solar symbol, while the thunderbolt must refer to Jupiter. The composite image – the radiated lion with a thunderbolt in his jaws – might then be interpreted either as a sign of Roman dominance over the east or as a symbol of combined divinity: Jupiter and Sol, overlords of world and cosmos. Other explanations of the lion, e.g. the interpretation of the lion as a sign of the zodiac (which would in Caracalla's case refer to Alexander the Great) and the military connotation of the animal (under Caracalla's reign a new military unit was set up, the *leones*), can be excluded, since these do not explain the occurrence of the lion on the coin types of the other five emperors.¹²⁴

The remaining categories – '*euergesia*' and 'geographical messages' – did not fluctuate much from joint to sole reign in the number of coin types issued (see figures 33 and 34). Not only did the number of coin types communicating a geographical message not differ widely, but the specific

¹¹⁸ *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 199, 211a), 250A, 491, 492B, 495.

¹¹⁹ *RIC* IV.1, Geta, nos. 179 and 181.

¹²⁰ See *RIC* IV.1, p. 86.

¹²¹ Jones, *A Dictionary of Ancient Roman Coins*, p. 108.

¹²² *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 273a), 273b), 273c), 273d), 273e), 283a), 283b), 283c), 296a), 296b), 296c), 548a), 548b), 552, 557a), 557b), 564a), 564b), 564c), 566A, 571a), 571b), 571c).

¹²³ Lichtenberger, *Severus Pius Augustus*, pp. 230–232.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

messages also remained similar. All presented an image of Rome.¹²⁵ The only difference is that on three types issued during Caracalla's sole rule a German kneels before Rome. These three types were all minted in the year 214 and probably refer to a victory over the Germans that was gained in 213.¹²⁶ The messages on coin types divided into the category '*euergesia*' did vary from Caracalla's joint to his sole reign. During the period 198–210 the *ludi saeculares* and a triumphal arch (probably the arch of Septimius Severus on the *forum Romanum*) received attention on coins, whereas the Circus Maximus appeared on coinage under Caracalla alone.¹²⁷ The image of the Circus Maximus might evoke Caracalla's rebuilding of the complex and/or his patronage of public entertainment.¹²⁸ *Moneta* and *annona*, however, were emphasized in both phases.¹²⁹

3. CONCLUSIONS

Investigation of Caracalla's coin types demonstrates that the image which the classical authors transmitted was unsurprisingly very different from what Caracalla broadcast himself. Whereas surviving literary sources portrayed him first and foremost as a soldier-emperor, Caracalla's coinage reveals a wider picture. His coins betray ideological departures from his joint reign with his father to Caracalla's sole reign. The coin types minted from 198 to 210 present a picture which, broadly speaking, is in line with third-century imperial representation in general; the majority of coin types communicate military messages and religious messages as well as messages which propagate *saeculum aureum* and virtues. Coin types broadcasting military messages were issued most frequently in 198–210. Yet, during Caracalla's sole reign a major shift in his representation took place. The majority of the coin types minted from 212 to 217 associated

¹²⁵ Joint reign: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 69, 71, 72, 90, 91, 342, 427. Sole reign: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 243, 530a), 530b), 533.

¹²⁶ Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle*, p. 162.

¹²⁷ *Ludi saeculares*: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 74a), 74b), 418, 420, 421. Triumphal arch: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 87A, 419. Circus: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 211b), 500a), 500b), 500c), 500d).

¹²⁸ *BMCRE* V, p. ccii.

¹²⁹ Joint reign: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 151A, 337a), 337b), 337c), 337d). Sole reign: *RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, nos. 236, 308. On coin types dated to the period 210–213 *moneta* is emphasized (*RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 224) and a triumphal arch depicted (*RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 212A). In addition, a type that is roughly dated to the period 202–210 bears the legend *SACRA SAECVLARIA* (*RIC* IV.1, Caracalla, no. 462).

the emperor with the divine, corroborating Dio's statement that Caracalla claimed to be the most pious of all mankind. This extraordinary large number of 'religious' coin types crowded out the number of coin types communicating other kinds of messages. Along with these changes, coin types with non-specific and unique messages circulated only during Caracalla's sole rule.

At the level of the messages themselves, we also see changes between the two phases of Caracalla's reign: coin types from the same representational category did not display identical messages from joint to sole reign. Thus, different messages were propagated and within the messages that were propagated there was a markedly different emphasis between both phases of Caracalla's reign. Also, the diversity of messages within a category differed. As to the category 'divine association' and 'military representation', different messages were propagated during joint and sole reign. With regard to the category '*saeculum aureum*', emphasis was put on different messages during the two phases of Caracalla's reign and the diversity of messages decreased during Caracalla's sole reign. Besides a decrease in diversity of dynastic- and *aeternitas* messages in the period 212–217, other messages were propagated during Caracalla's sole reign. Concerning *euergesia* types, in the period 212–217 other messages were propagated in comparison with the period 198–210.

The fluctuations in the attention paid to specific forms of representation and the changes in the content of messages between joint and sole reign might be explained through Septimius Severus' ideological determinations during the joint reign and Caracalla's implementation of his own ideological preferences after his father died.¹³⁰ While we must however not ignore the continuity in the ideological messages broadcast during both phases, change dominates Caracalla's self-presentation as joint rule yielded to sole power.

¹³⁰ A comparison between the numismatic propaganda on coins issued during an emperor's joint reign and the messages broadcast through coins struck during his sole reign could give the discussion on who was ultimately responsible for the messages on coins, emperor or mint masters, a new impulse, see Manders, "Boodschappen van de keizer?".

CHAPTER SEVEN

DECIUS

1. IMAGES OF DECIUS¹

Sources describe the circumstances in which Decius attained the purple in 249 in different ways. The most extensive accounts of Decius' reign appear in Zosimus' and Zonaras' writings, composed respectively around 500 A.D. and in the twelfth century A.D.² According to them, the ruling emperor Philippus Arabs had sent Decius to the Danubian legions as governor of Moesia and Pannonia in order to secure loyalty and restore discipline. After a few successes, these legions hailed Decius as emperor. Subsequently, Decius marched against Philippus Arabs and defeated him. Decius became emperor and remained so until his death in June 251 in battle against the Goths.³ He was the first ever Roman emperor who died in battle.

Although Decius' reign was short and the accounts of his rule given by the sources are fragmentary and not consistently reliable, he did not pass into oblivion. The main reason for this was an edict issued in 249, shortly after Decius' accession to the throne, that urged all inhabitants of the Empire to sacrifice to the gods, eat the sacrificial meat and swear that they had always sacrificed.⁴ Unsurprisingly, this caused conflicts for the Christian minority of the population, and persecution of Christians resulted. Whether the edict, however, was targeted against Christians from the beginning is by no means clear and remains a subject of scholarly

¹ On the image of the emperor Decius, see also Manders, "Communicating messages through coins".

² Zosimus 1.21–3 and Zonaras 12.19–20. See further Rives, "The decree of Decius and the religion of empire", pp. 138–139.

³ Potter, *The Roman Empire at Bay*, pp. 245–246.

⁴ Evidence for Decius' decree: *libelli* (for the most complete collection see J.R. Knipfing, "The libelli of the Decian persecution", *HTR* 16 (1923), pp. 345–390), writings of Cyprian (*Epistulae* 5–41, *De Lapsis*) and the letters of Dionysius of Alexandria (Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 6–7) as well as an account of a martyrdom in Smyrna (*Passio Pionii*, see H. Musurillo, *The Acts of the Christian Martyrs* (Oxford, 1972), pp. 136–167). See Rives, "The decree of Decius and the religion of empire", p. 136.

discussion.⁵ Nevertheless, Decius' decree can be seen as a turning point in how Roman authorities dealt with Christianity; 'it is now the religious sentiment of the imperial court – rather than that of the local populace – that is to determine the well-being or otherwise of Christians'.⁶

Obviously, this edict provoked hostile responses from Christian writers; Decius was seen as an *execrabile animal* and a *tyrannus ferociens*.⁷ Decius' decree and its consequences, however, have not only been the most important points of interest in Christian writings on Decius. Most modern research on Decius also focuses on Decius' religious policy. Whereas many scholars explain Decius' decree by the emperor's intended return to traditional religion,⁸ Rives initiated a breakthrough in this topic of research by setting Decius' edict in the context of the restructuring of religious organization in the Roman Empire:

It was in some ways the religious analogue to Caracalla's citizenship decree: while the latter replaced the mishmash of local citizenships with a universal and theoretically homogeneous citizenship, the former [Decius' decree] summarized the huge range of local cults in a single religious act that signalled membership in the Roman Empire.⁹

In a recent contribution to this debate Bleckmann contradicts Rives.¹⁰ That the persecutions of the Christians stopped at a certain point during Decius' reign (mid-250) implies in Bleckmann's view that the edict and the interrelated measures had a short-term aim, whereas the creation of an empire-wide religion would be a long-term 'project' covering Decius' whole reign.¹¹ Bleckmann prefers an alternative explanation for the issuing of the edict in December 249/January 250: after the disrupting civil war that marked the beginning of his reign, Decius was attempting to ensure the loyalty of all inhabitants of the Roman Empire.¹²

⁵ See for instance Gradel, *Emperor Worship and Roman Religion*, p. 368 and Clarke, "Third-century Christianity", p. 626. See above, p. 22.

⁶ Clarke, "Third-century Christianity", p. 626.

⁷ *Execrabile animal*: Lactantius, *De Mortibus Persecutorum* 4.1. *Tyrannus ferociens*: Cyprian, *Epistulae* 55.9.2.

⁸ See for instance H. Pohlsander, "The religious policy of Decius", *ANRW* 16.3 (1986), pp. 1826–42.

⁹ Rives, "The decree of Decius and the religion of empire", p. 153. See also Potter, *The Roman Empire at Bay*, p. 243. For an analogue with the *Constitutio Antoniniana* see also Potter, *The Roman Empire at Bay*, p. 243.

¹⁰ Bleckmann, "Zu den Motiven der Christenverfolgung des Decius", pp. 57–71.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 66.

Decius' religious policy largely determined the emperor's image in modern literature. This can be explained partly through the consequences of the emperor's measures, and partly because the literary sources hardly provide any (reliable) information on other aspects of Decius' reign. Yet, literary texts form only one part of the evidence for Decius' emperorship; other sources should not be ignored. Decius' coinage, however, has never been analysed thoroughly; it offers concrete information on various aspects of Decius' reign.¹³ In this chapter, imperial coinage will be used to recover the imperial image that Decius communicated to his subjects. Although attention will not be paid primarily to Decius' religious policy, an analysis of Decius' coins might enable us to draw some additional insights as to this aspect of Decius' reign as well.

During Decius' short reign, a considerable number of imperial coin types was issued; in the *Roman Imperial Coinage* 190 specimens are listed.¹⁴ From these 190 types, 160 display the emperor's portrait and titulature on the obverse, whereas 30 types belong to the so-called *divi* series. The latter series consists of consecration types that bear portraits of deified predecessors of Decius and the legend *DIVO* together with the specific emperor's name on the obverse. In the first section, Decius' standard coin types are analyzed on the basis of their division into representational categories. In the second section, the series of coin types devoted to Decius' deified predecessors are discussed.

2. STANDARD TYPES

When the 160 coin types bearing Decius' portrait and titulature on the obverse are distributed over the various representational categories (see chapter one), the below image emerges. Figure 35 shows that within Decius' representation of power the emphasis lay heavily on military representation and geographical messages; 37.5% of the total number of Decius' coin types present a military theme, while 35.6% of the total number of coin types communicate a geographical message. Decius' military and geographical messages can be linked to each other: because of

¹³ Previous analyses of Decius' coinage have focused primarily on the *divi* series. A brief general analysis of Decius' coins, however, does appear in H. Mattingly, "The coins of the 'divi', issued by Trajan Decius", *NC* 9 (1949), pp. 75–82.

¹⁴ Seven hybrids and one type with a blank reverse are not included here.

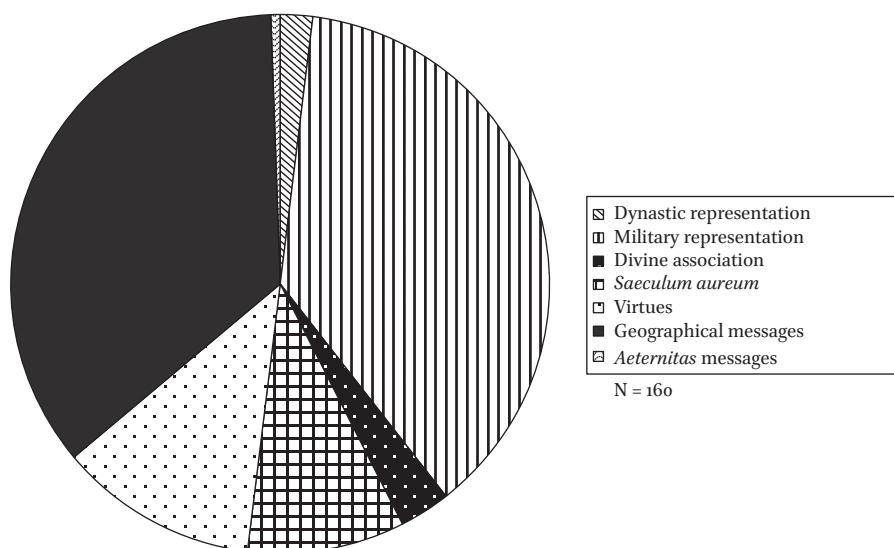


Figure 35 Proportions of coin types distributed over the representational categories for the period A.D. 249–251

their emphasis on a specific military unit, the Illyrian troops, the majority of military coin types also convey a strong geographical message.

Out of the 60 military coin types, 30 bear the legend GENIVS EXERCITVS ILLVRICIANI and four the legend EXERCITVS INLVRICVS (*sic*) (*image 23*).¹⁵ A possible explanation for the glorification of these particular legions could be that they expressed public thanks on the emperor's behalf to the troops who had appropriated the imperial purple for him; thus, the coins advertised the emperor's military support. Another possibility is that the coins aimed to secure the loyalty of these military units. After all, the loyalty of the Illyrian troops specifically was needed for Decius' battle against Germanic tribes.¹⁶ The emperor may also have grasped how essential the loyalty of these particular military units was, since the legions in the Danubian area were already playing a leading

¹⁵ GENIVS EXERCITVS ILLVRICIANI: *RIC* IV.3, Trajan Decius, nos. 3a), 3b), 4a), 4b), 16a), 16b), 16c), 17a), 17b), 18, 39a), 39b), 40, 103, 104a), 104b), 105a), 105b), 105c), 105d), 117a), 117b), 117c), 117d), 117e), 118a), 118b), 118c), 119a), 119b). EXERCITVS INLVRICVS (*sic*): *RIC* IV.3, Trajan Decius, nos. 102a), 102b), 102c), 102d). See also above, p. 93.

¹⁶ On the website <http://www.roman-emperors.org/decius.htm> (consulted at 13 June 2011), R. McMahon argues that Decius' departure to the Danubian area was announced on coins bearing the legends EXERCITV ILLVRICVS, GENIVS EXERCITVS ILLVRICIANA and PANNONIAE. However, the types themselves do not hint at departure.



Image 23 *Genius exercitus illuriciani* (RIC IV.3, Trajan Decius, no. 16c)

role in electing emperors and in military activities.¹⁷ In any case, securing and/or advertizing the loyalty of these legions was almost certainly the aim of the four types with the legend *EXERCITVS INLVRICVS* (*sic*), since an image of *Fides* accompanies the legend on all four types. The remaining 26 military types consist of 19 *victoria* types and seven *adventus* types. Among these *victoria* types 18 types refer to the concept of victory in general, while one points at a specific victory, *VICTORIA GERMANICA*.¹⁸ The latter type might evoke an actual or alleged victory over the Goths.¹⁹ The *adventus* types might point to Decius' arrival in Rome after his victory over Philippus Arabs.²⁰

As for the geographical messages, seven out of 57 coin types mention *GEN ILLVRICI* but without explicit military references in the legend.²¹ Out of these 57 coin types, 15 bear the legend *PANNONIAE* and refer

¹⁷ Alföldy, "Die Krise des Imperium Romanum und die Religion Roms", p. 100. See also Alföldy, *Die Krise des Römischen Reiches*, p. 385 and K.-P. John, "Die Illyrischen Kaiser als Herrscher neuen Typs", in: John, Gerhardt and Hartmann, *Deleto paene imperio Romano*, pp. 125–134.

¹⁸ *VICTORIA AVG*: RIC IV.3, Trajan Decius, nos. 7a), 7b), 7c), 29a), 29b), 29c), 42a), 42b), 48, 108a), 108b), 108c), 126a), 126b), 126c), 126d), 126e), 126f). *VICTORIA GERMANICA*: RIC IV.3, Trajan Decius, no. 43.

¹⁹ RIC IV.3, p. 113.

²⁰ U. Huttner, "Zwischen Traditionalismus und Totalitarismus. Zur Ideologie und Praxis der Regierung des Kaisers Decius", in: John, Gerhardt and Hartmann, *Deleto paene imperio Romano*, pp. 37–56; p. 40.

²¹ RIC IV.3, Trajan Decius, nos. 9, 15a), 15b), 38a), 38b), 116a), 116b).

thus to Pannonia Superior and Pannonia Inferior.²² The personifications of Pannonia or the two Pannoniae are veiled and depicted together with military standards on all types. The image of military standards, which could recall the military activities that took place in this area as a consequence of barbaric invasions and/or legions stationed there, stamps an implicit military connotation onto these types. However, as the legends on these types indicate, they emphasized the region itself and not, as with the GENIVS EXERCITVS ILLVRICIANI- and EXERCITVS INLVRICVS (*sic*) types, particular military units. It therefore seems that these types glorify Pannonia, which must have held special significance for this emperor who was born in that region. Moreover, by portraying Pannonia as pious through veiled personifications of Pannonia, the emperor may have aimed to advertise piety toward his homeland. The hypothesis that Decius glorified Pannonia on his coins because he was born there finds support in that, out of all third-century emperors, only Aurelian and Quintillus celebrated Pannonia on their coins.²³ Whereas the Illyrian emperor Quintillus' place of birth is completely unknown, Aurelian may well have been born in Pannonia.²⁴

The majority of coin types from the category 'geographical messages' bear the legend DACIA or DACIA FELIX.²⁵ Thirty-two out of 35 DACIA types present a personification of the province Dacia, in most cases together with a military standard (and thus probably evoking the reaction on barbaric invasions and/or legions stationed there) and sometimes with a vertical staff surmounted by a long-eared head like that of an ass.²⁶ Three types bearing the legend DACIA show a Genius with *polos*, *patera*, *cornucopiae*, and standard.²⁷ The *cornucopiae* that the Genius holds on the latter types and the addition of *felix* to Dacia in the legend of eight other types communicate the area's prosperity. A possible motive for Decius to have featured Dacia so prominently on his coins was to associate

²² RIC IV.3, Trajan Decius, nos. 5, 20, 21a), 21b), 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 41a), 41b), 124a), 124b), 124c), 124d).

²³ RIC V.1, Quintillus, nos. 60 and 61. RIC V.1, Aurelian, no. 113.

²⁴ It is not securely known whether Aurelian was born in Pannonia or in Dacia (see Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle*, p. 234).

²⁵ DACIA: RIC IV.3, Trajan Decius, nos. 2a), 2b), 12a), 12b), 13, 35a), 35b), 35c), 36a), 36b), 101a), 101b), 101c), 101d), 101e), 101f), 101g), 112a), 112b), 112c), 112d), 112e), 112f), 113a), 113b), 113c), 113d). DACIA FELIX: RIC IV.3, Trajan Decius, nos. 14a), 14b), 37a), 37b), 37c), 114a), 114b), 114c).

²⁶ According to Jones, the types showing Dacia with a staff surmounted by a long-eared head refer to a local cult. See Jones, *A Dictionary of Ancient Roman Coins*, p. 81.

²⁷ RIC IV.3, Trajan Decius, nos. 35a), 35b), 35c).

himself with his great predecessor Trajan, who fought two successful battles against the Dacians in 102 and 107. A first certain step in linking himself with Trajan was Decius' adoption of the name Trajan. Decius' Dacia propaganda probably formed a second step. Both initiatives, then, betray attempts by Decius to legitimize his power by presenting himself as Trajan's heir in some respects.²⁸ Although the Dacia types lack any direct military reference and their legends mention only the region itself explicitly, the military standards, the association with Trajanus Dacicus, and the references to prosperity on some types (which could probably be linked to military activities as a consequence of barbaric invasions) combine to connote indirect military associations for the particular types. As mentioned before, the same association follows from the Pannonia types that also portray military standards.

Besides the categories 'military representation' and 'geographical messages', 'virtues' (11.9%) and '*saeculum aureum*' (9.4%) occupy the largest proportion of types. There is, however, a marked difference between the percentages of coin types from either of the two largest categories and those of coin types in the categories 'virtues' and '*saeculum aureum*'. Moreover, the percentages of coin types belonging to the last-mentioned categories are both lower than the third-century mean for each category (17.4% ('virtues') and 19.2% ('*saeculum aureum*')).

Out of the 19 types presenting an imperial virtue, eight display *liberalitas*, five present *virtus*, three show *aequitas*, two mention *pudicitia*, and one emphasizes *pietas*.²⁹ Comparison to the propagation of these specific virtues highlights two peculiarities. First, *liberalitas* is the virtue propagated most on Decius' coinage. This is remarkable because Decius seems clearly to have considered military representation his most important self-representational priority (see figure 35); one would thus expect *virtus*, referring to the emperor's military capacities, to have been the most prominent virtue on his coins. However, Decius was no exception; when the ratio between the virtues propagated on coin types of all third-century emperors is analyzed, we see that 11 emperors who reigned before Decius (Pertinax, Caracalla, Geta, Elagabalus, Severus Alexander, Maximinus Thrax, Balbinus, Pupienus, Gordian III, Philippus I and

²⁸ See also above, p. 68.

²⁹ LIBERALITAS AVG(G): RIC IV.3, Trajan Decius, nos. 19, 106, 120a), 120b), 120c), 121, 122, 123. VIRTUS: RIC IV.3, Trajan Decius, nos. 8, 109a), 109b), 109c), 127. AEQVITAS AVG(G): RIC IV.3, Trajan Decius, nos. 44a), 44b), 45. PVDICITIA AVG: RIC IV.3, Trajan Decius, nos. 46a), 46b). PIETAS AVGG: RIC IV.3, Trajan Decius, no. 32.

Philippus II) emphasized *liberalitas* most among their virtues. It was only after the reign of Decius that *virtus* was accentuated most, while *liberalitas* disappeared almost entirely from imperial coinage.³⁰ Decius is actually the last emperor whose coins propagated *liberalitas* among his virtues. This prominence of *liberalitas* on coins struck from 193 to 251 might stem from attempts of specific rulers to maintain the loyalty of the *plebs urbana*.³¹ That *liberalitas* disappeared almost entirely from imperial coinage in the second half of the third century, while *virtus* ranked first among the virtues displayed, could be explained through the increasing extent to which the emperors, personally active in military affairs, owed their position to the troops. Apparently, satisfying the *plebs urbana*, originally a key ingredient in legitimizing imperial power, was less important to emperors after Decius.

Second, Decius' propagation of *pudicitia* is exceptional. As has been pointed out in relation to Hadrian's chastity, coin types displaying *Pudicitia* on the reverse appear normally only together with an obverse promoting an empress or other female member of the imperial family.³² However, Decius – like Hadrian – deviated from this tradition.³³ No indications that *pudicitia* applied to imperial women are found on Decius' coins. Apparently, the virtue *pudicitia* applied to Decius himself. Noreña explains the appearance of *pudicitia* on Hadrian's coins by placing its occurrence within the ideological context of the second century A.D.:

In the second century A.D., domestic harmony and conjugal love were emphasized, with more regularity and insistence than in earlier periods, as necessary conditions for marital stability. The emperor's own marriage was not exempt from these demands. Just as in any other marriage, the affective bond between husband and wife within the imperial household depended on the sexual chastity not only of the empress, but of the emperor as well. In fact, the emperor's marriage was supposed to be exemplary in this regard. And because of the symbolic association between the domestic harmony of

³⁰ For the decrease of *liberalitas* types see above, pp. 166–168. For the increase of *virtus* types see above, p. 171.

³¹ See Huttner, "Zwischen Traditionalismus und Totalitarismus", p. 40. See also above, pp. 167–168.

³² C.F. Noreña, "Hadrian's Chastity", *Phoenix* 61.3–4 (2007), pp. 296–317; p. 302.

³³ *Pudicitia* was also propagated on the coins of Septimius Severus (*RIC* IV.1, Septimius Severus, no. 524), Hostilian (*RIC* IV.3, Hostilianus, nos. 203a)–203e)), Trebonianus Gallus (*RIC* IV.3, Trebonianus Gallus, no. 88), Volusian (*RIC* IV.3, Volusianus, nos. 204, 232–233b)), Gallienus (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 272). According to Mattingly, Gallienus' *pudicitia* type refers to his wife Salonina, while the types of Septimius Severus and Volusian are labeled respectively 'unusual' and 'uncertain'. See also above, p. 162 n. 23.

the imperial household and the political harmony of the Roman state, both expressed by the ideal of *concordia*, the chastity of the Roman emperor not only conduced to the marital bliss of the imperial couple, but also guaranteed political order.³⁴

Although in the third century the emphasis on domestic harmony and conjugal love did not remain as strong as in the second century, we could transfer Noreña's explanation for the *pudicitia* types struck under Hadrian to the *pudicitia* types minted during Decius' reign. Decius, then, would have issued these specific types so as to set a moral *exemplum* and to emphasize the political harmony of the state, in this probably emulating Hadrian. However, the question as to why, out of all third-century emperors, only Decius issued types propagating his own chastity remains unanswered. He must have had a specific reason for issuing these peculiar types; possibly he wanted to associate himself with another Antonine emperor (apart from Trajan) but this is highly speculative since it is doubtful that people would have noticed this. A more obvious explanation for the *pudicitia* types could be that Decius was trying to promote normal family life.

Within the category '*saeculum aureum*', *pax*, having a military connotation, was emphasized most (6 types).³⁵ FELICITAS SAECVLI and ABVNDANTIA were each propagated on four types, while VBERITAS adorns only one type.³⁶

Three percent of Decius' coin types belong in the category 'divine association'. Analysis of the five coin types with a 'religious message' yields the following observations. Only one coin type depicts a deity, namely Mars.³⁷ Decius' predilection for military types explains his attention to the war god easily enough. Still, other gods' and goddesses' absence from Decius' coinage is rather peculiar compared to general trends in third-century representation.³⁸ In addition, the remaining four types bear the legend VOTIS DECENNALIBVS and show a laurel wreath.³⁹ These coin types publicize vows made for the success and perpetuity of Decius'

³⁴ Noreña, "Hadrian's Chastity", p. 311.

³⁵ RIC IV.3, Trajan Decius, nos. 6, 27, 107a), 107b), 125a), 125b).

³⁶ FELICITAS SAECVLI: RIC IV.3, Trajan Decius, nos. 115a), 115b), 115c), 115d). ABVNDANTIA: RIC IV.3, Trajan Decius, nos. 10a), 10b), 33a), 33b). VBERITAS: RIC IV.3, Trajan Decius, no. 28.

³⁷ RIC IV.3, Trajan Decius, no. 128.

³⁸ Rives, "The decree of Decius and the religion of empire", p. 143; Mattingly, "The coins of the 'divi', issued by Trajan Decius", p. 80.

³⁹ RIC IV.3, Trajan Decius, nos. 30, 110a), 110b), 110c).

emperors. Finally, the total absence of references to the emperor as *sacerdos* from all coin types issued under Decius is strange for three reasons.⁴⁰ First, the figure of the emperor normally dominated sacrificial iconography.⁴¹ Second, images of the emperor as a priest usually appear at least on coins of emperors who had announced their sons as successors.⁴² Third, it is puzzling, in view of his decree requiring subjects to sacrifice, that Decius neglected a complementary policy of representing himself as *sacerdos*. After all, one would expect that the emperor would act as *exemplum* with regard to his own policy.

Which conclusions can be drawn regarding Decius' divine association? The low percentage of 'religious' coin types (compared to other representational categories and third-century averages) indicates that Decius' priority in his coinage did not lie with propagating his connection with the divine. Moreover, within the small group of coin types propagating divine association, the majority were types bearing the legend VOTIS DECENNALIBVS, obviously minted to publicize Decius' attempts to safeguard his emperors. What, then, might be deduced regarding the interpretation of Decius' edict? Since Decius' coins seem to demonstrate that religion as such (that means in this case piety towards the Roman gods) was not at all (emphatically) emphasized within Decius' ideology, and that it was subordinated to the success of Decius' emperors, the coins seem to suggest that Decius' decree was a means of legitimizing his power. Decius' religious measures do not seem to have been enacted because of a comprehensive religious policy; more likely, Decius employed religion to bolster subjects' loyalty to him. Any restructuring of Roman religion seems to have been a side-effect. The coins, then, support Bleckmann's interpretation of Decius' edict. In fact, the conclusions drawn from imperial coinage and thus (at least to an extent) from the emperor's own wishes and points of view, offer much stronger evidence than the biased writings of Christian authors. However, in view of all coin types minted from 249 to 251 and especially the many military messages propagated on these types, possibility remains open that Decius used his coins in the first place to communicate with his soldiers and secure *their* loyalty.

The category 'dynastic representation' also yields few examples; only two percent of Decius' types belong to this category. Two types accentuate

⁴⁰ Rives, "The decree of Decius and the religion of empire", p. 143. See also above, p. 137.

⁴¹ Gordon, "The veil of power", p. 205.

⁴² See also above, p. 137.

concordia Augustorum and one glorifies Decius' wife, Herennia Etruscilla.⁴³ Although only three dynastic types were minted during Decius' reign, these dynastic claims seem to indicate that Decius, having two sons, might have wanted to create his own dynasty in order to safeguard imperial succession.

Finally, less than one percent of all coin types bear *aeternitas* messages – effectively only one coin type issued during Decius' reign belongs to this category. This particular coin type propagates ROMAE AETERNAE, thus promoting the eternal existence of Rome.⁴⁴

3. THE *DIVI* SERIES

A remarkable series of coins was minted during Decius' reign (*image 24*). This series, consisting of 30 types, honored 11 deified predecessors of Decius: Augustus, Vespasian, Titus, Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius, Commodus, Septimius Severus, and Severus Alexander.⁴⁵ Claudius, Lucius Verus, Pertinax, and Caracalla are the only four deified emperors excluded from the series. The omission of these particular *divi* is difficult to explain, though perhaps the choice of *divi* should be seen as a deliberate selection of emperors who were deemed truly worthy of the honor.⁴⁶ The types, bearing portraits of the particular *divi* together with the legend DIVO AVGVSTO/VESPASIANO/etc. on the obverses, have an extraordinary character and so cannot be grouped together with Decius' standard coin types, i.e. types showing Decius' portrait and titulature on the obverse. Therefore, the *divi* series are discussed separately from the above analysis. The reverses of the types celebrating the 11 *divi* bear the legend CONSECRATIO and depict either an eagle or an altar, both common icons signalling *consecratio*.

The *divi* series has received much attention in modern literature.⁴⁷ Frequently, only the consecration coins are discussed, to the complete neglect

⁴³ CONCORDIA AVGG: *RIC* IV.3, Trajan Decius, nos. 31 and 131. HERENNIA ETRVSCILLA AVG: *RIC* IV.3, Trajan Decius, no. 130.

⁴⁴ *RIC* IV.3, Trajan Decius, no. 47.

⁴⁵ *RIC* IV.3, Trajan Decius, nos. 77, 78, 79, 80, 81a), 81b), 82a), 82b), 83a), 83b), 84a), 84b), 85a), 85b), 86a), 86b), 87, 88, 89, 90, 91a), 91b), 92a), 92b), 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98.

⁴⁶ Potter, *The Roman Empire at Bay*, p. 244.

⁴⁷ See for example Mattingly, "The coins of the 'divi', issued by Trajan Decius", pp. 75–82; M. Radnoti-Alföldi, "The consecration coins of the third century", *AArchHung* (1955), pp. 57–70; Pohlsander, "The religious policy of Decius", pp. 1830–31; K.E.T. Butcher, "Imagined emperors: personalities and failure in the third century", *JRA* 9 (1996),



a) Augustus (*RIC IV.3*, Trajan Decius, no. 78) b) Vespasian (*RIC IV.3*, Trajan Decius, no. 79)



c) Nerva (*RIC IV.3*, Trajan Decius, no. 84b)) d) Antoninus Pius (*RIC IV.3*, Trajan Decius, no. 89)



e) Commodus (*RIC IV.3*, Trajan Decius, no. 93) f) Septimius Severus (*RIC IV.3*, Trajan Decius, no. 96)

Image 24 Decius' consecration coins

of Decius' other coins. Yet, because of the rarity of Decius' consecration types, it seems questionable whether the prominence of the *divi* series in modern literature is justified.⁴⁸

Modern scholars provide the following explanations for the consecration types. The issues have been presented as a rewriting of the Roman past. According to Potter, Decius was trying to rewrite the more distant

pp. 515–527; p. 522; Rives, “The decree of Decius and the religion of empire”, pp. 142–143; Gradel, *Emperor Worship and Roman Religion*, p. 368; Potter, *The Roman Empire at Bay*, p. 244; Bleckmann, “Zu den Motiven der Christenverfolgung des Decius”, p. 64; Hekster, *Rome and its Empire*, p. 68.

⁴⁸ See *RIC IV.3*, Trajan Decius, nos. 77–98.

past by showing only a select number of *divi* on his consecration coins.⁴⁹ Bleckmann argues on the other hand that, with the *divi* series, Decius wanted to divert attention from the circumstances in which he came to power. In his view, Decius was rewriting recent history.⁵⁰ Additionally, Butcher has suggested a more practical explanation for the *divi* coins; in his eyes, the series could be considered a compensation for the overstriking of *denarii*, which were minted by the emperors present on the coins belonging to the *divi* series. After all, the overstriking of *denarii* began under the rule of Decius.⁵¹ However, most modern authors consider the *divi* series in the context of Decius' presumed traditionalism; whether the worship of the 11 emperors who had made Rome great is interpreted as a reference to Roma Aeterna, as a revival of Roman religion, or both, these interpretations all presuppose that the worship of the 11 emperors who had contributed to Rome's success expresses Decius' traditionalism or, as Pohlsander puts it, his conservatism.⁵²

Curiously enough, no modern author stresses how exceptional the *divi* series itself was. The grouping together of these 11 *divi* in one series of consecration coins was a novelty in the representation of imperial power, and Decius was the only Roman emperor who minted such a series. With this series of coins, Decius may have wanted to invoke the support of his deified predecessors in a period when problems within the Empire were ubiquitous. The 11 emperors who had made Rome great could be of assistance in countering the problems that Decius faced. Another possible motive for the issuance of the consecration series could have been some sort of attempt to legitimize Decius' power, either by venerating good emperors collectively or, more specifically, by connecting himself with Trajan.⁵³ The latter had issued a series of 'restoration coins' during his reign.⁵⁴ This Trajanic restoration series includes coins referring to various themes and people, such as Republican heroes (e.g. Horatius Cocles,

⁴⁹ Potter, *The Roman Empire at Bay*, p. 244.

⁵⁰ Bleckmann, "Zu den Motiven der Christenverfolgung des Decius", p. 64.

⁵¹ Butcher, "Imagined emperors", p. 522.

⁵² Mattingly, "The coins of the 'divi', issued by Trajan Decius", p. 81; Pohlsander, "The religious policy of Decius", pp. 1830–31; Rives, "The decree of Decius and the religion of empire", pp. 142–143; Hekster, *Rome and its Empire*, p. 68.

⁵³ On the *divi* coins as a means of legitimizing imperial power by venerating good emperors collectively, see S. Dmitriev, "'Good emperors' and the emperors of the third century", *Hermes* 132 no. 2 (2004), pp. 211–224.

⁵⁴ Titus, Domitian, Nerva, and Trajan all issued restoration coins. Restoration coins are characterized by the word REST(ITVIT) which forms part of the reverse legend and is connected with the issuer of the coins. These coins were restorations of coins issued by earlier

M. Furius Camillus, P. Decius Mus, and Cato) and several deified emperors (Divus Iulius Caesar, Divus Augustus, Divus Claudius, Divus Vespasianus, Divus Titus, Divus Nerva).⁵⁵ Trajan's restoration series differs from Decius' consecration series in two respects. First, Decius' consecration coins are not restoration coins.⁵⁶ Second, whereas Decius' series includes only consecration coins, Trajan's series includes, next to consecration coins, also other coins. Nevertheless, Decius' consecration series might refer to the consecration types within Trajan's restoration series. After all, Trajan and Decius were the only emperors to issue coin types referring to a considerable number of deified rulers who reigned in the distant and more recent past. If this was the case, then Decius probably used this link with the *optimus princeps* as a means of legitimizing his power. As we have seen before, there are more indications for attempts by Decius to link himself to Trajan for propagandistic reasons; he connected himself with the *optimus princeps* by adopting Trajan's name, and possibly through his 'Dacia propaganda' on his coins.

It remains however notable that, while the worship of Decius' deified predecessors by means of these coins betrays traditionalism, the grouping together of these eleven *divi* in one series of consecration coins was exceptional and innovative.

4. CONCLUSIONS

This analysis of Decius' coin types fills some gaps in the incomplete image of this third-century emperor, which is mainly based on his religious measures and its consequences. The coins issued under his reign strongly suggest that the attention paid to his 'religious policy' in modern literature needs to be reconsidered; his coins give the impression that no such policy existed. After all, Decius' numismatic propaganda, as it was communicated by his standard coins, consisted mainly of military and geographical messages. This might also have consequences for the

emperors or, in Trajan's case, Republican officials. See further H. Komnick, *Die Restitutionsmünzen der frühen Kaiserzeit* (Berlin, 2001).

⁵⁵ RIC II, Restored coins of Trajan, nos. 765–836. On Trajan's restoration coins see Komnick, *Die Restitutionsmünzen der frühen Kaiserzeit*, pp. 110–138, 155–157, 175–178.

⁵⁶ 'Die Divus Augustus-Münzen von Tiberius und die Münzen der Konsekrationsemission des Traianus Decius können ebenfalls nicht als restituierte Münzen angesprochen werden, da sie über keine Prototypen verfügen', Komnick, *Die Restitutionsmünzen der frühen Kaiserzeit*, pp. 4–5.

interpretation of Decius' famous edict, which seems to have been issued in order to legitimize his power and not as part of a comprehensive religious policy.

Moreover, against the background of general trends in imperial representation in the third century, Decius emerges as an innovator. First, whereas divine association, military representation, *saeculum aureum*, and virtues were the most common representational forms in the third century, the majority of Decius' standard types foreground both military and geographical themes. Second, as for specific messages on Decius' coins, the celebration of Dacia and Pannonia, the glorification of *exercitus Illyricus*, and the propagation of the virtue *pudicitia* (rarely linked to the emperor himself), were exceptional in third-century imperial representation. Finally, although the consecration coins issued during Decius' reign refer to rulers in the past and communicate a return to the traditional worship of *divi*, their exceptionality demands more attention. Apart from being a persecutor of Christians, Decius can thus be seen as having eclectic and innovate tastes in imperial representation.

CHAPTER EIGHT

GALLIENUS

1. IMAGES OF GALLIENUS

Among all third-century rulers, Gallienus was probably the most tested one. He became Augustus in 253 and ruled together with his father Valerian until 260, the year in which the latter was captured by the Persian king Shapur. After this grave humiliation for the Romans, Gallienus reigned as sole ruler for another eight years. In 268 he fell victim to a conspiracy of generals so that the Illyrian Claudius Gothicus obtained the purple.¹

Especially during Gallienus' sole rule the circumstances in which he had to rule became increasingly worse: 'one of the few facts that we know for certain about the Emperor Gallienus is that he lived at a time of the most calamitous instability, in one of the darkest periods of Roman history'.² Threats posed by the Persians, 'barbarian' tribes (such as the Marcomanni, Goths, Sarmatians, Quadi, Roxolani, Alamanni, and the Franks), the Palmyrene queen Zenobia, the Gallic Empire, usurpations (Ingenuus, Regalian, Macrian Senior and Junior, Quietus, Piso, Valens, Ballista, Musius Aemilian, Memor, Aureolus)³ as well as the plague, natural disasters, piracy, brigandage, and an economic crisis placed the emperor in a series of difficult positions.⁴

In reaction to the military problems, Gallienus took strong measures. He created an independent military unit which could respond swiftly to barbarian invasions and used vassal princes and allies to defend border areas.⁵ In addition, the 'tendency to employ nonsenators in virtually all

¹ Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle*, p. 218.

² De Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus*, p. 1.

³ Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle*, pp. 223–230.

⁴ See De Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus*, pp. 1–22.

⁵ On the creation of an independent military unit see Potter, *The Roman Empire at Bay*, p. 257 and H.-G. Simon, "Die Reform der Reiterei unter Kaiser Gallien", in: W. Eck, H. Galsterer, and H. Wolff eds., *Studien zur Antiken Sozialgeschichte: Festschrift Friedrich Vittinghoff* (Cologne and Vienna, 1980), pp. 435–452. See further De Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus*, pp. 26–30.

significant roles of government' reached a climax under Gallienus.⁶ Senators were no longer appointed as legionary legates and governors of provinces with legions stationed in them.⁷ This likely made the emperor rather unpopular with the senatorial class; the negative accounts of Gallienus' reign, mostly written by authors stemming from the senatorial order, betray senatorial antipathy toward the emperor.⁸

Gallienus' reforms were not restricted to the military realm. He broke rigorously with his father's policy toward the Christians. Whereas Valerian had persecuted Christians on a large scale, Gallienus took several measures in their favor: he issued three decrees which put an end to persecutions, returned places of worship to churches, and permitted bishops to recover Christian cemeteries.⁹ By these decrees, the Christians were effectively granted freedom of religion. It is remarkable, however, that the Christian authors hardly mention this acquired freedom. Lactantius does not report it at all and Orosius says only that Gallienus restored peace to the churches because he was terrified by the fate of his father Valerian which was, says Orosius, imposed on him by the Christian God.¹⁰ Gallienus' measures seem to have elevated only Eusebius' image of this emperor. This author discusses Gallienus' edicts in more detail.¹¹

Besides his decrees in favor of Christians, Gallienus reformed the monetary system. He put it entirely at the service of the soldiers.¹² More than his predecessors, he decentralized the imperial mint and consistently founded mints behind the military sectors where his armed forces were situated. He also donated large gold and silver *multipla* to favored military personnel, probably particularly to the higher and middle military cadre, from which he also recruited most of his *protectores*. In this way Gallienus tried to secure the soldiers' pay and thus to guarantee their loyalty. However, these measures, combined with a further drop in weights

⁶ Potter, *The Roman Empire at Bay*, p. 258.

⁷ Ibid.; E. Lo Cascio, "The government and administration of the empire in the central decades of the third century", in: Bowman, Garnsey and Cameron, *CAH* 12², pp. 156–169; pp. 158–161. See further: P. Cosme, "À propos de l'Édit de Gallien", in: Hekster, De Kleijn and Slootjes, *Crises and the Roman Empire*, pp. 97–109.

⁸ See for example H.A. Gallienus and Aurelius Victor, *De Caesaribus* 32–33.

⁹ See Clarke, "Third-century Christianity", pp. 645–647 and P. Keresztes, "The peace of Gallienus: 260–303 A.D.", *WS* 9 (1975), pp. 174–222.

¹⁰ Orosius, *Historiarum adversus paganos libri VII* 7.22.

¹¹ Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 7.13.1. See further L. de Blois, "Christians and Roman imperial politics. The changing position of Christians in the third century A.D.", *JEastCS* 53 (2001, 1–2), pp. 105–123; pp. 121–123.

¹² De Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus*, pp. 87–100.

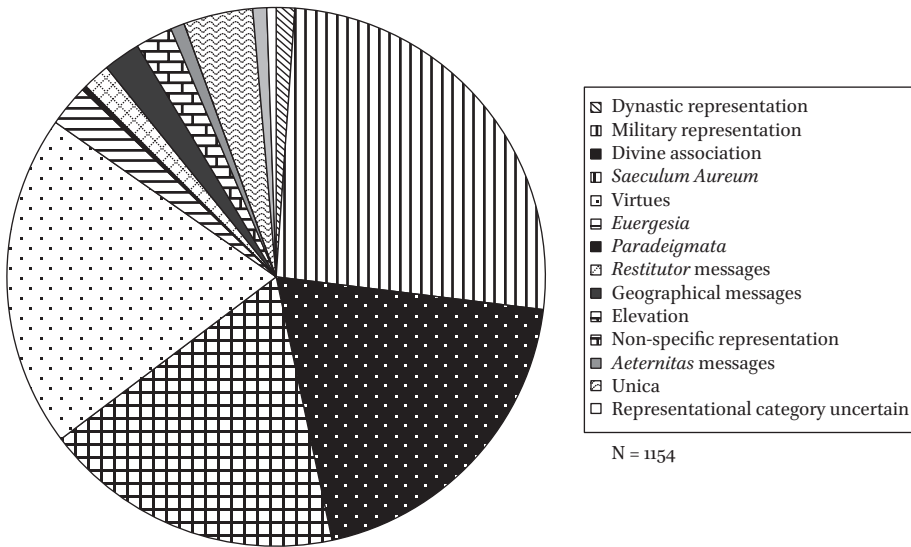


Figure 36 Proportions of coin types spread over the categories of representation for the period A.D. 253–268

and standards of mainly *aurei* and *antoniniani*, had a dramatic effect on the monetary system. Gold coins, for example, were no longer coins, but lumps of gold of very different weights and finenesses.

Since Gallienus' monetary innovations seem to have been intended mainly to secure his troops' loyalty, one would expect that at least some part of the messages visible on Gallienus' coins would betray the same intention. After all, coinage was the medium *par excellence* for communicating with the troops.¹³

In view of the division of the coin types issued in the period 253–268 into representational categories (see figure 36), it is evident that the category 'military representation' had the most instances (26.5%). However, other categories, namely 'divine association' (20.3%), '*saeculum aureum*' (18.3%), and 'virtues' (20.5%), were substantial as well.¹⁴ It is therefore obvious that Gallienus' emphasis did not lie in military representation alone. Considering the overall balance between the categories, Gallienus seems to have been 'traditional', which means that he conforms to the

¹³ See above, pp. 63–64.

¹⁴ The total percentage is more than 100% because some coin types belong to more than one category.

general third-century picture (see figure 1). To nuance this result somewhat, however, it is necessary to distinguish coin types issued during Valerian's and Gallienus' joint reign from types issued under Gallienus' sole reign. Gallienus reigned for a relatively long period, but out of the 15 years of his rule, he reigned together with his father for seven. A discussion of Gallienus' self-representation both on coins struck during the joint reign and on coins from his sole rule can highlight differences between joint and sole reign that might locate Gallienus' personal influence on coinage, just as separate analyses between types from Septimius' and Caracalla's joint rule and those struck in Caracalla's sole reign proved to illustrate Caracalla's own preferences.¹⁵

2. COMPARING IMPERIAL IMAGERY ON COIN TYPES ISSUED DURING JOINT AND SOLE REIGN

In the *Roman Imperial Coinage*, Mattingly distinguishes between Gallienus' coin types issued during Valerian's and Gallienus' joint reign and types struck during Gallienus' sole reign.¹⁶ From the joint reign, 469 coin types are listed, whereas 685 coin types are mentioned for Gallienus' sole reign. By following Mattingly's distinction and, subsequently, dividing the coin types of both periods into representational categories, the below graphs result (see figures 37 and 38).¹⁷

Figure 37 shows the proportions of Gallienus' coin types issued during Valerian's and Gallienus' joint reign in each representational category, while figure 38 demonstrates the same for the coin types struck in Gallienus' sole reign.¹⁸ Figure 37 shows that coins propagating military messages were issued on a large scale; 37.1% percent of Gallienus' coin types from his joint reign promote a military theme. The second largest category is 'virtues' (20.3%). As discussed below, the emphasis within this category lies on the militaristic term *virtus*. The propagation of military themes thus dominated imperial representation during the joint reign.

¹⁵ See above, pp. 229–251.

¹⁶ Although Mattingly dates the capture of Valerian to the year 260, he classifies thirteen types under 'sole reign' that date to 259. He also classifies one type under Valerian's and Gallienus' joint reign even though it is dated to the year 250 (rule of Decius).

¹⁷ The total percentage of coin types in both graphs is more than 100% because some types belong to multiple categories.

¹⁸ In *RIC V.1* Mattingly already distinguishes between coin types issued during the joint reign and coin types struck during Gallienus' sole reign.

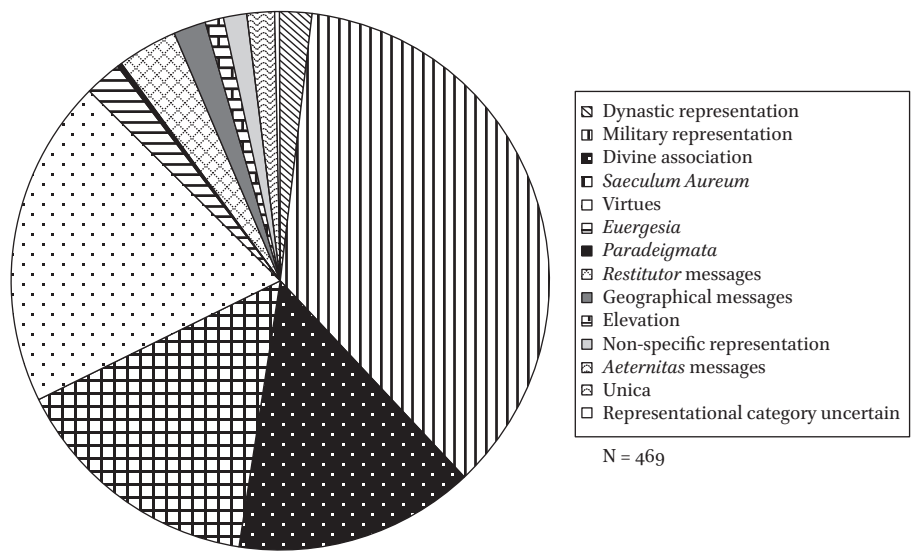


Figure 37 Proportions of coin types distributed over the representational categories for the period A.D. 253–259

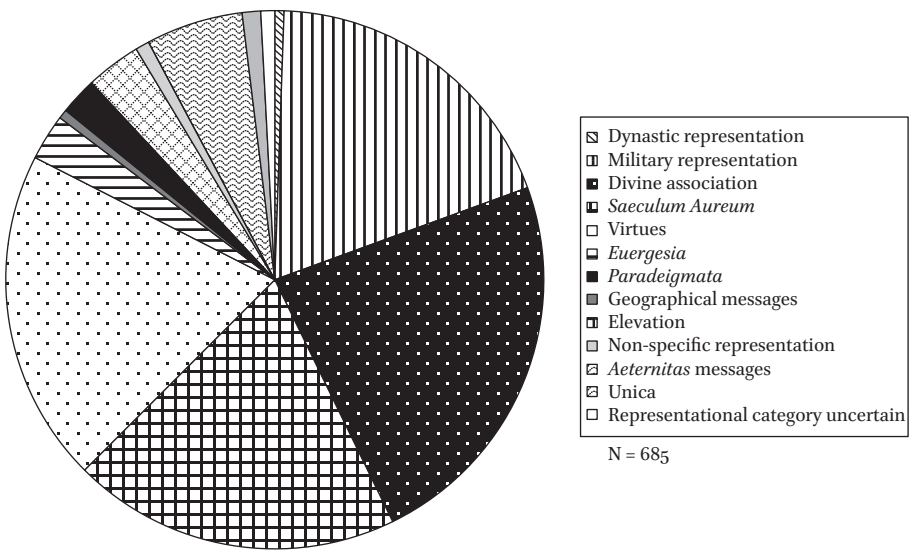


Figure 38 Proportions of coin types distributed over the representational categories for the period A.D. 260–268

The less-represented categories 'divine association' (14.7%) and '*saeculum aureum*' (15.4%) were of almost equal proportion. The sum of the coin types from the remaining categories equals the number of coin types belonging to either 'divine association' or '*saeculum aureum*'. Out of these small categories, '*restitutor* messages' is the largest.

Since nearly all coin types struck during the joint reign are precisely or approximately dated, it is possible to outline diachronic change in the different forms of representation on Gallienus' coins during the joint reign (see the tables presented in appendix five).¹⁹

Because the smaller categories contain few coin types, discussion of developments within these categories is statistically unjustified. Therefore, I will only elaborate on diachronic changes in the four largest categories, namely 'military representation', 'divine association', '*saeculum aureum*', and 'virtues', as well as those in the largest small category, '*restitutor* messages'. As for military representation, coin types presenting a military theme were struck during every year of the joint reign. Conspicuous, however, is that toward the end of Valerian's and Gallienus' joint rule – from 257 onward – the minting of military types increased sharply compared to other categories' production.²⁰ This increase in military types parallels an increase of invasions.²¹

In 257, 258, and 259 the legionary series were struck; these types, adorning a large proportion of the coins issued during the last part of Valerian's and Gallienus' joint reign, advertise the military support that Gallienus received and thus propagate his legitimacy.²² The majority of the other coin types minted during these last years of the joint reign propagate *victoria Germanica*.²³ These types could recall victories over German tribes such as the Alamanni and Franks.²⁴ Thus, the considerable increase in military types from the year 257 onward might reflect attempts to guarantee the loyalty of the armed forces and to propagate the invincibility of Empire and emperor(s) as barbarian invasions increased.

¹⁹ Undated coin types and the coin type dated to 250 are excluded from the tables.

²⁰ See tables 7 and 8 in appendix five.

²¹ See above, p. 94.

²² See below, p. 279.

²³ The legionary series and the victory types will be elaborated upon below.

²⁴ De Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus*, p. 6; W. Kuhoff, *Herrschartum und Reichskrise. Die Regierungszeit der römischen Kaiser Valerianus und Gallienus (253–268 n. Chr.)* (Bochum, 1979), p. 44. However, all these victory types need not necessarily evoke actual events. See above, p. 84.

As for the development of the category 'divine association', Gallienus was associated with the divine on coin types issued in every year of the joint reign. Types featuring this form of representation were struck more or less uniformly over the years. The proportion of types propagating a connection with the divine is somewhat higher in the year 257. Coin types propagating *saeculum aureum* and virtues, meanwhile, were minted in almost every year. The category '*saeculum aureum*' increased modestly for the year 253 and for the period 256–258, whereas the category 'virtues' shows a slight increase for 255–258. The slight increase in virtues types could accompany the many military measures that took place from 255 to 258; within this category, *virtus* was propagated most during these years. The modest rise in *saeculum aureum* types, propagating for instance *pax*, *laetitia*, and *securitas*, might have resulted from military victories gained in this period.²⁵ Finally, although coin types propagating *restitutor* messages were not issued every year, the few types that were minted appeared more or less evenly over the years 253–259.

Thus, the categories 'military representation', 'virtues' and '*saeculum aureum*' seem to increase at roughly the same time and to a higher or to a lesser extent. The series of military activities that took place from 255–259 offers the most obvious explanation for this. Unsurprisingly, Gallienus wanted to demonstrate that he was the right man in the right place during a period of military upheaval.

Whereas during Valerian's and Gallienus' joint reign many military messages seem to have been communicated on Gallienus' coin types, Gallienus' sole reign featured more attention to 'divine association'. However, the disparity in proportion between 'divine association' and the remaining categories during Gallienus' sole reign was not as pronounced as the gap between military representations and the other categories in the joint reign. During Gallienus' sole reign, 'divine association' formed the largest representational category (24.1%) followed by 'virtues' (20.6%) and '*saeculum aureum*' (20.3%). Analysis of types from Gallienus' sole reign reveals that the size of the category 'military representation' was reduced (19.3%) in comparison with the joint reign; it constitutes the smallest category of the four largest ones. Among the smaller representational categories, messages propagating *aeternitas* appear most frequently.

The large proportion of the category 'military representation' during Valerian's and Gallienus' joint reign, as well as the reduction of the

²⁵ See below, pp. 277–278.

military types and the increase of the coin types associating the emperor with the divine during Gallienus' sole reign, resembles Caracalla's changes in self-representation between joint and sole reign. The most striking difference between Caracalla's and Gallienus' coinages, however, marks the exorbitant size which the category 'divine association' assumed during Caracalla's sole reign; 66.9% of coin types issued during Caracalla's sole rule connect the emperor with the divine, against 24.1% of Gallienus' coin types struck during his sole reign.²⁶

Besides the differences between the proportions of the categories 'military representation' and 'divine association' from Gallienus' joint versus sole rule, it is also conspicuous that during Gallienus' sole reign no *restitutor* coins were minted, whereas the category '*restitutor* messages' was the largest among the minor categories during the joint reign.²⁷ Presumably, the emperor considered other forms of representation more important during his sole reign, one of the most desperate periods in Roman history. Furthermore, some coin types issued during Gallienus' sole reign bear a unique theme, whereas no such coins were struck during the joint reign.

Thus, discrepancies are visible between joint and sole reign. Apparently, Valerian's and Gallienus' joint rule emphasized different forms of representation than Gallienus' sole policies. It is noticeable, however, that the proportion of types displaying military themes diminished through the years. After all, the Empire's unity was threatened continuously during Gallienus' sole reign.²⁸ This paradox could be explained by hesitation on Gallienus' part to promote military themes after Valerian's humiliating capture by the Persians. It also demonstrates, however, that coins do not necessarily recall actual circumstances directly. Moreover, tradition might have played a part – for instance, in accentuating the military capacities

²⁶ The parallel changes from joint to sole reigns within the categories 'military representation' and 'divine association' emerges for only two emperors here. This appears to be too small a basis for concluding that, in general, a junior Augustus had to emphasize his military qualities in order to prove that he was suitable for the emperorship, while a senior Augustus had to propagate his connection with the gods in order to communicate his divine election and assistance. Further research about discrepancies in divine and military representations between joint and sole reigns of other emperors is necessary in order to distinguish patterns.

²⁷ '*Restitutor* messages' joint reign: 3.6% (17 types). '*Euergesia*' joint reign: 2.3% (11 types). 'Geographical messages' joint reign: 2.1% (10 types). 'Dynastic representation' joint reign: 1.9% (9 types). '*Aeternitas*-messages' joint reign: 1.9% (9 types). 'Non-specific representation' joint reign: 1.3% (6 types). 'Elevation' joint reign: 1.1% (5 types). '*Paradeigmata*' joint reign: 0.2% (1 type).

²⁸ Although the Empire faced continual threats during Gallienus' sole reign, military problems peaked in 260 and 267.

of a junior Augustus and then emphasizing other forms of representation (such as divine association) during the reign of a senior Augustus.

Unfortunately, many of the coin types issued during Gallienus' sole reign are undated. Therefore, it is impossible to delineate precisely the diachronic change in the various representational categories within this period. Instead, we now turn to possible differences and continuations concerning the specific messages propagated during joint and sole reign. Is it possible, as it was in Caracalla's case, to distinguish the messages within a representational category between joint rule and sole rule?

2.1 *Military representation*

As the category that exhibits the largest numerical difference between joint and sole reign, victory is emphasized in both periods. Among Gallienus' coin types issued during Valerian's and his joint reign, 82 of 174 military types propagate victory. The majority of these victory types celebrate triumph over German tribes and other northern neighbors; 45 types, all minted in Lugdunum, bear the legend VICTORIA (AVG(G) (IT)) GERMANICA, while eight types call the emperor GERMANICVS MAXIMVS (TER/V).²⁹ The majority of the coin types propagating *Victoria Germanica* depict Victoria. Three types portray the emperor either receiving a wreath from Victoria or being crowned by her, while one type features a trophy between captives.³⁰ The image last mentioned, a trophy between captives, adorns all *Germanicus Maximus* types.

The types that emphasize *victoria Germanica* and name the emperor *Germanicus Maximus* almost certainly evoke victories over German tribes taking place during the joint reign. After all, Gallienus claimed to have conquered German tribes in 254, 255, 256/7, 257, 258, 259–261.³¹ However, since the victories proclaimed by Gallienus did not always reflect actual

²⁹ VICTORIA (AVG(G) (IT)) GERMANICA: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 2, 3, 39–49, 61–63, 50–52, 95–98, 173–179, 180, 180a, 194–196, 283–285, 406, 429, 430, 451, 452. GERMANICVS MAXIMVS (TER/V): *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 17–19, 60, 141, 142, 382, 383. According to Kienast, the title *Germanicus Maximus* dates to 255, the title *Germanicus Maximus* III to 257, and the title *Germanicus Maximus* V to 258 (Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle*, p. 219).

³⁰ Emperor receiving a wreath from Victoria: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 451 and 452. Emperor crowned by Victoria: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 285. Trophy and captives: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 177.

³¹ Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle*, p. 219.

circumstances,³² we must keep in mind that Gallienus seems constantly to have proclaimed victories in order to receive the *aurum coronarium*, for propagandistic reasons, or both.³³ Therefore, probably not all types propagating victory over the Germans referred to actual circumstances.

The remaining Victory types minted during the joint reign refer mainly to victory in the abstract; 26 types bear the legend VICTORIA AVG/AVGG.³⁴ Twenty-four types display Victoria next to the legend VICTORIA AVG/AVGG. The other two types portray a soldier together with the emperor who receives a wreath from Victoria.³⁵ In addition, another coin type proclaiming victory in the abstract portrays the emperor in a *quadriga* being crowned by Victoria, combined with standard imperial titulature in the legend.³⁶ Again, it is doubtful whether all these victory types reflect any actual circumstances.

Among the remaining coin types referring to victory, the type presenting the legend VICT GALLIENI AVG and an image of the emperor treading down an enemy associates victory directly with the emperor himself through its legend.³⁷ The other type, bearing the legend VICTORIA PART and depicting of the emperor receiving a wreath from Victoria, propagates a specific victory over the Persians, probably won after the Persian capture of Dura in 256.³⁸

Besides the coins that propagate victory, types honoring particular legions form the largest group. The legionary series, comprising sixty coin types, were minted from 257 to 259 (*image* 25). The legends of the legionary types proclaim specific legions' name together with the honorific titles *pius* and *fidelis*,³⁹ while their images present the symbols of the particular legions named in the legend.⁴⁰

³² See for instance the chronology of Gallienus' reign presented in De Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus*, pp. 1–8 and in Kuhoff, *Herrschart und Reichskrise*, pp. 71–74.

³³ *Aurum coronarium*: De Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus*, pp. 90–91.

³⁴ RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 4, 92–94, 169–172, 192, 193, 242–244, 279–282, 299, 300, 304, 405, 415, 421, 422, 434, 450.

³⁵ Soldier: RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 300. Emperor receiving wreath from Victoria: RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 450.

³⁶ RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 313.

³⁷ RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 38.

³⁸ See Hartmann, *Das palmyrenische Teilreich*, p. 130.

³⁹ Kuhoff argues that, from the early principate onward, legions that distinguished themselves in battle against 'Gegenkaisern' received the honorific titles *pius* and *fidelis*. The numbers connected with P F on Gallienus' legionary series point to the renewed bestowal of these honorific titles upon the specific legions (see Kuhoff, *Herrschart und Reichskrise*, pp. 48–49).

⁴⁰ E. Ritterling, "Legio", in: *RE* 12.1–2 (Stuttgart, 1924/1925), pp. 1186–1829; p. 1374. On some coins other symbols than the symbols which were normally used for particular



Image 25 Legionary coin of Gallienus (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 372)

Opinions vary on the reasons why these legionary coins were minted. Some modern scholars have connected them with actual victories.⁴¹ More satisfying, however, seems De Blois' hypothesis.⁴² He reads Gallienus' legionary series in a larger context; not only Gallienus but also the *triumvir* Mark Antony, a general, Septimius Severus, the first soldier emperor, and Clodius Macer, a usurper, issued legionary coins. The issuance of legionary coins generally can be seen as a 'direct form of military propaganda – a direct attempt to bind the soldiers to the emperor, which had hitherto [before Gallienus' reign] only been made by declared military potentates'.⁴³ In the third century, however, the soldiers' acceptance of the emperor's claim for power became vital, which places Gallienus' legionary coins in a different context. Gallienus' legionary series, then, must be considered in the first place an advertisement of the military support that Gallienus received toward the end of the joint reign, as expressed by naming the particular legions that supported the emperor. The additions *pius* and *fidelis*, which Mark Antony's, Clodius Macer's, and Septimius Severus' coins had not broadcast, support this hypothesis. Presumably, Gallienus' coin type bearing the legend *COHORT PRAET PRINCIPI SVO* and depicting a laurel-wreath on the reverse should be understood in the same way.⁴⁴

legions are depicted. Probably, either the die-cutters or the interpreters made a mistake (Ritterling, "Legio", p. 1374).

⁴¹ See for example J. Fitz, "Les antoniniani des légions de Gallien", in: J. Heurgon et al. eds., *Mélanges d'archéologie, d'épigraphie et d'histoire, offerts à Jérôme Carcopino* (Paris, 1966), pp. 353–365.

⁴² See De Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus*, pp. 109–111.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 109.

⁴⁴ *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 417. See also above, p. 93.

Although the legionary series were exceptional, the 15 coin types bearing the legend *fides militum/exercitus* and the 11 types propagating *concordia exercitus/militum/legionum* should be interpreted in almost the same light as the legionary types and the type with the legend COHORT PRAET PRINCIPI SVO, i.e. as propagating the emperor's legitimacy by proclaiming the support of specific military units.⁴⁵ However, the *concordia* and *fides* types mention no particular legions or military units directly connected with the emperor (by means of the reverse's legend or the obverse) that supported him. Instead, general qualities of the troops as a whole, namely harmony (*concordia*) within, as well as loyalty (*fides*) of the armed forces, are propagated. Apart from the fact that both series of coin types propagate the emperor's legitimacy by referring to the troops, the *fides* and *concordia* types resemble the legionary coins in another respect: both series of coins reflect the growing power of the armed forces in imperial matters.

The remaining military coin types issued during Valerian's and Gallienus' joint reign consist of two types referring to *adlocutio*, one type propagating *adventus*, and two types each with a legend of standard imperial titulature, one of which depicts a soldier, while the other shows both emperors, Valerian and Gallienus, with military attributes.⁴⁶ The latter type thus asserts a dynastic claim too.

The composite picture offered by the military coin types from Gallienus' sole reign is comparable with the image stemming from the military types issued during Valerian's and Gallienus' joint reign. Within this general picture, however, some shifts emerge.

Out of the 132 military types, 83 emphasize victory or invincibility. In contrast to the joint reign, the number of types propagating victory over German tribes differs: only ten types propagate *victoria Germanica*, and just one type presents the title GERMAN MAX TR P.⁴⁷ Perhaps few victories over German tribes were won, or the need to proclaim or emphasize

⁴⁵ *Fides militum/exercitus*: RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 11–16, 108, 137, 138, 213, 214, 267, 268, 381, 426. *Concordia militum/exercitus/legionum*: RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 70–72, 132, 209, 253, 265, 376–379. See further De Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus*, p. III.

⁴⁶ *Adlocutio*: RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 106, 107. *Adventus*: RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 260. Standard imperial titulature: RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 115 (soldier) and 435 (emperors).

⁴⁷ *Victoria Germanica*: RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 122, 307, 308, 377, 400–402, 435–437. RIC no. 435 bears the legend VICT GER II. This victory is, according to Kienast (*Römische Kaisertabelle*, p. 219), dated to 256/257. This coin type, issued during Gallienus' sole reign, refers then probably to a victory gained/officially proclaimed during the joint reign. GERMAN MAX TR P: RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 200.

victoria Germanica in particular disappeared, or the decrease in references to *victoria Germanica* could be caused by the existence of Postumus' Gallic Empire.⁴⁸ The two undated coin types bearing the legend VICTORIA PART might refer to victories over the Persians gained by Odaenathus in 262–263 or in 267.⁴⁹

Victory in the abstract adorns 63 coin types. Two types bear standard imperial titulature and depict the emperor being crowned by Victory, whereas 61 types propagate VICTORIA AVG.⁵⁰ The majority of the latter types include a number in the VICTORIA AVG legend;⁵¹ three types bear the legend VICTORIA AVG II, nine types VICTORIA AVG III, one type VICTORIA AVG VI, four types VICTORIA AVG VII, one type VICTORIA AVG VIII, and another type VICTORIA AVG VIII.⁵² The numbering of victories could indicate that the word *victoria* had more or less lost its significance for individual events, so that the types bearing these legends were deployed exclusively to spread imperial ideology without recalling real victories.⁵³ Yet, we must keep in mind that Gallienus, by himself and through his ally Odaenathus, gained some actual military victories during his sole reign (for instance over usurpers like Postumus, and against the Heruli and the Persians). It is, however, complicated to link coins with actual victories since Gallienus' coin types referring to victory are difficult to date. Still, some connection between image and reality can be deduced with Victoria II Germanica dating to 256/7 and Victoria VI, VII, and VIII to the period 259–261.⁵⁴ Nevertheless, as already

⁴⁸ On the possibility that few victories were won over German tribes, see the chronology presented by Kuhoff (*Herrschartum und Reichskrise*, pp. 71–74). He lists hardly any victories over German tribes for the period 261–268 (only a victory over the Heruli in 267).

⁴⁹ *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 309 and 310. See Hartmann, *Das palmyrenische Teilreich*, pp. 162–175 and pp. 211–216.

⁵⁰ Types with standard imperial titulature: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 3 and 454.

⁵¹ Kuhoff argues that already during the joint reign victories were numbered on Gallienus' coins (see Kuhoff, *Herrschartum und Reichskrise*, p. 49). However, *RIC* attests no such types for the joint reign.

⁵² VICTORIA AVG II: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 83, 129, 524. VICTORIA AVG III: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 84, 130, 304–306, 397, 398, 434, 525. VICTORIA AVG VI: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 399. VICTORIA AVG VII: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 85, 86, 410, 526. VICTORIA AVG VIII: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 527. VICTORIA AVG VIII: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 528. Remaining types emphasizing victory in general: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 77–82, 124–128, 148, 298–303, 362, 363, 374–376, 520–523, 587, 588, 622, 662–666.

⁵³ See already F. Taeger, *Charisma. Studien zur Geschichte des antiken Herrscherkultes* II (Stuttgart, 1960), p. 438.

⁵⁴ Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle*, p. 219. Thus, the coin types bearing the legend VICTORIA AVG II (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 83, 129, 524) or VICT GER II (*RIC* V.1,

pointed out, Gallienus' proclamation of victories in specific periods does not mean that he gained actual victories.

Seven coin types from Gallienus' sole reign associate *victoria* directly with the emperor through the legend VIC(T) GAL(L) AVG.⁵⁵ On three of these types *victoria* is numbered; they bear the legend VICT GAL AVG III.⁵⁶ The remaining two coin types bear the legend INVICTO/INVICTVS (AVG) and portray Sol with a whip.⁵⁷ These types go one step further than the types that link *victoria* directly to the emperor; they connect the emperor, whose portrait is visible on the obverse of the particular types, with invincibility.

After considering all victory types issued during Gallienus' sole reign that emphasized a specific victory or victory in general, we could conclude that they refer either to an actual victory, to a victory gained during the joint reign or to an imaginary victory. The latter type of victory might have been propagated in order to lay claim to the *aurum coronarium*, or to portray the emperor in a positive light, or both.

The second largest group of coin types issued during Gallienus' sole reign from the category 'military representation' refers to the armed forces. Thirty-five types propagate *fides militum/equitum/exercitus/legionum/praetorianorum*, whereas only one type emphasizes *concordia equitum*.⁵⁸ The respective proportions of *fides* and of *concordia* types hardly differed during the joint reign. Yet, Gallienus' sole reign saw emphasis shift to loyalty instead of harmony. One coin type struck in the sole rule must be interpreted in the same way as the legionary series minted towards the end of Valerian's and Gallienus' joint reign, namely as a direct advertisement of specific military unit's support for the emperor. The type bears the legend CHORS TERTIA PRAETORIA and depicts the emperor wielding a spear and four ensigns.⁵⁹ In contrast with the joint reign, the loyalty

Gallienus sole reign, no. 435) that were issued during Gallienus' sole reign seem to refer to a victory gained and/or officially proclaimed during the joint reign.

⁵⁵ RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 75, 292–296, 519.

⁵⁶ RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 75, 295, 519.

⁵⁷ RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 639 and 640. These types also belong to the category 'divine association'.

⁵⁸ *Fides militum*: RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 10–13, 38–41, 102, 192a, 366, 367, 416, 417, 447, 475, 480, 481, 570, 571. *Fides praetorianum*: RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 36, 37, 476, 568, 569. *Fides equitum*: RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 33–35, 445, 446. *Fides legionum*: RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 477, 479, 567, 635. *Fides exercitus*: RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 478. *Concordia equitum*: RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 472. See also above, p. 92.

⁵⁹ RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 7. See also above, p. 93.

of the armed forces as a whole seems to have earned more emphasis than the support of one specific military unit during the sole reign. Moreover, by naming Gallienus CONSERVATOR EXERC on another coin type, the emperor connected himself closely with the army as a whole.⁶⁰ The coin type propagating GENIVS EXE conforms well to this emphasis on the army as a whole.⁶¹

The remaining military coin types from Gallienus' sole reign consist of five types bearing the legend ADVENTVS AVG and three types presenting standard imperial titulature. Since the *adventus* types are all undated, it is impossible to connect them with actual events.⁶² Two coin types with legends consisting of standard imperial titulature depict the emperor as carrying a spear and a *parazonium*.⁶³ The third type bearing a legend with standard imperial titulature portrays the emperor with spear and globe.⁶⁴

2.2 Divine association

'Divine association' was the other category that changed its proportion significantly after Valerian's capture by the Persians. Did the messages propagated on coin types in this category also change from Valerian's and Gallienus' joint reign to Gallienus' sole rule?

Deities appeared on coin types struck during both joint and sole reigns.⁶⁵ On types struck during the joint reign, both Jupiter and Apollo assumed the function of *conservator*. Out of the 16 coin types referring to Jupiter, nine present Jupiter as *conservator*, whereas among the 16 types showing Apollo, 13 display Apollo as *conservator*.⁶⁶ Apparently, at least numismatically, Apollo bore more ideological importance during the joint reign than the chief god Jupiter. On the other hand, Aemilian and Valerian before Gallienus had put Apollo Conservator on their coins, as did Claudius Gothicus, Quintillus, and Aurelian after him. Moreover,

⁶⁰ RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 173.

⁶¹ RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 199.

⁶² *Adventus* types: RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 22, 158, 463, 551, and 552.

⁶³ RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 18 and 549. Because two river-gods appear next to the emperor, these types also belong to the category 'divine association'.

⁶⁴ RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 548.

⁶⁵ Two coin types showing nameless river gods (RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 18, 549) are excluded from this analysis.

⁶⁶ Jupiter as *conservator*: RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 76, 77, 143, 189, 215–218, 440. Apollo as *conservator*: RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 125–127, 129, 205, 206, 251, 261–263, 374, 416, 425.

on Claudius Gothicus' coin types too Apollo Conservator appears more frequently than Jupiter Conservator. Gallienus' coinage was thus not as exceptional as it may at first seem.

Apart from the Jupiter Conservator types, others honoring Jupiter bear the legends IOVI VICTORI (three types), IOVI CRESCENTI (one type), and IOVI VLTORI (one type).⁶⁷ One additional type displays the legend PACATORI ORBIS with a depiction of Jupiter with *patera*, scepter, and eagle.⁶⁸ The legend of the remaining type consists of standard imperial titulature and an image of Jupiter with thunderbolt and scepter embellishes it further.⁶⁹ While the legends IOVI VICTORI, IOVI VLTORI and PACATORI ORBIS may seem to convey military undertones, the type bearing the legend IOVI CRESCENTI – and showing an image of the child Jupiter on a goat (Amalthea) – communicates the dawning of a golden age.⁷⁰

As was the case with Jupiter, Apollo's main function was *conservator*. The other Apollo types consist of one type bearing the legend APOLINI PROPVG (*sic*) and the image of Apollo drawing a bow, communicating a militaristic message, and two types bearing standard imperial titulature and depicting Apollo with a whip.⁷¹

The other male deities represented on Gallienus' 'religious' coinage minted during the joint reign were Mars and Sol.⁷² Mars appears on nine

⁶⁷ IOVI VICTORI: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 21–23. IOVI CRESCENTI: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 20. IOVI VLTORI: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 219. Another type which bears the legend PIET SAECVLI (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 393) shows a depiction of a child riding on a goat. This image is interpreted as Jupiter and Amalthea by the editors of *RIC*. This type is also discussed above, see p. 182.

⁶⁸ *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 294.

⁶⁹ *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 116.

⁷⁰ On the dawning of a golden age as expressed by a coin type bearing the legend IOVI CRESCENTI and showing the image of the child Jupiter on Amalthea, see *LIMC* 8.1 (lemma Zeus/Iuppiter), p. 460. This imagery also appears on two coin types bearing the legend PIET SAECVLI which belong to the category 'virtues' (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 393 and 394; see also above, p. 182) and on one coin type bearing the legend LAETIT TEMP which belongs to the category 'saeculum aureum' (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 384; see below, p. 292 n. 134).

⁷¹ APOLINI PROPVG: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 128. Apollo with whip: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 6 and 7. On the latter type, see also above p. 125.

⁷² Hercules appears on a coin type from the category 'virtues' bearing the legend VIRTVS AVG (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 454; see below, p. 295). Mercury emerges on two coin types bearing the legend FORTVNA REDVX which belong to the category 'elevation' (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 75 and 292; see below, p. 301). Neptune adorns three legionary coin types from the category 'military representation' (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 359, 368, 369; see above, pp. 278–279). Saturn is featured on a coin type bearing the legend AETERNITATI AVGG which belongs to the category 'aeternitas messages' (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 289; see below, p. 298).

types while Sol adorns five types.⁷³ The types representing Sol bear all standard imperial titulature and depict Sol holding a whip.⁷⁴ The coin types on which Mars is named *propugnator* and *pacifer* as well as the types with standard imperial titulature presenting Mars with spear and trophy evoke war and, in the case of Mars Pacifer, its possible consequence (peace).⁷⁵ Furthermore, three exceptional Mars types were struck: one bears the legend DEO MARTI and portrays Mars in a temple, while Mars and Rhea Silvia were depicted together on the two remaining types.⁷⁶ The types showing an image of Mars and Rhea Silvia revert to ancient Roman imagery.⁷⁷

Four female deities appear on Gallienus' coins from his joint reign.⁷⁸ Represented on four types is Diana (three types bearing the legend DIANA FELIX and one type the legend DIANA LVCIFERA),⁷⁹ two types show Vesta, one displays Juno Regina and another a depiction of Venus Victrix.⁸⁰

Besides the coin type propagating FELICIT DEORVM, referring to the Roman pantheon as a whole, and, more specifically, to the consequences of *pax deorum*,⁸¹ the remaining coin types from the joint reign that belong to the category 'divine association' all connote sacrifice. Ten coin types portray the emperor making a sacrifice, while VOTA ORBIS and VOTIS

⁷³ Mars is also represented on coins bearing the legend VIRTUS AVGG. These types are discussed in 8.2.3 (category 'virtues'). In addition, Mars appears on one legionary coin type which belongs to the category 'military representation' (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 319; see above, pp. 278–279).

⁷⁴ *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 117, 119, 119a, 120, 121. Sol also appears on coins bearing the legend ORIENS AVG/AVGG and AETERNITAS AVGG. These types will be discussed below, p. 292, p. 298 and p. 300.

⁷⁵ MARTI PROPVGNATORI: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 25, 152, 153. MARTI PACIF S C: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 225. Mars with spear and trophy: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 5 and 8.

⁷⁶ DEO MARTI: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 10. Mars and Rhea Silvia: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 67 and 68.

⁷⁷ See further De Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus*, p. 133.

⁷⁸ Minerva appears on two legionary coin types which belong to the category 'military representation' (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 322 and 323; see above, pp. 278–279).

⁷⁹ Diana is also represented on coin types bearing the legend FELICITAS SAECVLI (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 74 and 291). These types will be discussed below, p. 292 (category 'saeculum aureum').

⁸⁰ DIANA FELIX: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 380, 418, 419. DIANA LVCIFERA: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 290. VESTA: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 241 and 278. IVNO REGINA: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 428. VENVS VICTRIX: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 298.

⁸¹ *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 133. See also above, p. 198.

DECENNALIBVS both are inscribed on two types.⁸² The coin types bearing the legend VOTA ORBIS convey a military connotation too; both types depict two Victories affixing a shield to a palm tree. Apparently, sacrifices were made in relation to military successes. The types with the inscription *vota decennalia* probably recalled the *vota* that Gallienus made for the next ten years of his rule.⁸³

The 'religious' coin types from Gallienus' sole reign introduced new deities (i.e. deities who did not appear on coin types belonging to the category 'divine association' which were minted during the joint reign); alongside Mars,⁸⁴ Apollo,⁸⁵ Jupiter, Sol,⁸⁶ Venus, Vesta, Diana, and Juno (gods represented also on 'religious' coin types issued during the joint reign), Neptune, Minerva, Liber, Aesculapius,⁸⁷ Serapis, Hercules,⁸⁸ Mercury,⁸⁹ Janus,

⁸² Emperor as *sacerdos*: RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 65, 66, 118, 123, 124, 287, 306–309. Two coin types bearing the legend PIETAS AVGG and showing an image of both emperors sacrificing (RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 446 and 447) will be discussed below, pp. 296 (category 'virtues'). VOTA ORBIS: RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 459 and 460. VOTIS DECENNALIBVS: RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 250 and 258.

⁸³ See De Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus*, p. 135.

⁸⁴ Mars also appears on coin types bearing the legend VIRTVS AVGVSTI (RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 90, 131, 132, 134, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 329, 330, 591) and VIRT GALLIENI AVG (RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 364) which belong to the category 'virtues'. Additionally, on a coin type bearing the legend VIRTVS AVG and belonging to the category 'virtues' the helmeted head of the emperor as Mars is depicted (RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 89). See below, p. 295.

⁸⁵ Apollo also appears on a coin type bearing the legend SALVS AVG which belongs to the category '*saeculum aureum*' (RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 610; see below, p. 293).

⁸⁶ Sol also appears on coin types bearing the legend ORIENS AVG which belong to the categories 'geographical messages' and '*saeculum aureum*', respectively (RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 62, 113, 114, 248, 249, 250, 251, 354, 448, 451, 494, 495, 496, 496a, 497, 498; see below, p. 292 and p. 300). Sol also appears on coin types bearing the legend AETERNITAS AVG which belong to the category '*aeternitas-messages*' (RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 24, 99, 160, 348, 465, 465a, 466, 555, 629, 630; see below, p. 298).

⁸⁷ Aesculapius also appears on coin types from the category '*saeculum aureum*' that bear the legend SALVS AVG which belong to the category '*saeculum aureum*' (RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 66, 511, 511a, 511b; see pp. 292–293).

⁸⁸ Hercules also appears on coin types from the category 'virtues' that bear the legend VIRTVS AVGVSTI (RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 5, 6, 16, 91, 327, 328, 331, 537, 539, 595, 623, 624, 671, 672, 673, 678; see below, p. 295).

⁸⁹ Mercury also appears on a coin type bearing the legend PROVIDENTIA AVG which belongs to the category 'virtues' (RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 653; see below, p. 296), on a coin type bearing the legend FIDES AVG which belongs to the category '*saeculum aureum*' (RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 607; see p. 294) and on a coin type bearing the legend FORTVNAE REDVCI which belongs to the category 'elevation' (RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 195; see below, p. 301).

and Vulcan adorn types minted in the period 260–268.⁹⁰ It is evident that Gallienus wanted to represent nearly the whole Roman pantheon on his coins, which undoubtedly stemmed from the serious troubles with which the emperor had to cope during his sole reign.

Moreover, among all the deities represented on coins struck during the sole rule, only Venus,⁹¹ Minerva,⁹² Serapis,⁹³ Vesta,⁹⁴ Janus,⁹⁵ and Vulcan did not assume the function of *conservator* or *conservatrix*.⁹⁶ Thus, 11 deities (Mars, Apollo, Jupiter, Sol, Diana, Juno, Neptune, Liber, Aesculapius, Hercules, Mercury) appeared as *conservatores* during Gallienus' sole reign, whereas during the joint reign only Jupiter and Apollo held this role. This increased crowd of *conservatores* was unique within the third century and must have represented a response to the multitude of problems that confronted Gallienus during his sole reign.

A large number of the *conservator* coin types belong to the so-called 'animal series' (*image 26*).⁹⁷ The animal series consist of 32 coin types which label particular deities (Apollo, Diana, Hercules, Jupiter, Juno, Liber, Mercury, Neptune, Sol) as *conservator*; such legends appear with images of animals that symbolize the featured god or goddess. Seven types refer to Apollo as *conservator* and depict an image of a centaur, a gryphon, or Pegasus.⁹⁸ Eight types present Diana, Apollo's sister, as *conservatrix* and show a doe, a stag, an antelope, a goat, or a boar.⁹⁹ Neptune is named in

⁹⁰ Saturn appears on two coin types bearing the legend AETERNITAS AVG, from the category 'aeternitas messages' (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 554, 606; see below, p. 298).

⁹¹ VENVS VICTRIX: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 289, 621, 660. VENVS FELIX: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 288. VENVS AVG: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 661.

⁹² MINERVA AVG: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 617 and 651. Coin type with standard imperial titulature and depiction of Minerva with Victory and spear: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 453.

⁹³ Coin type with standard imperial titulature and a depiction of Serapis with spear and rabbit (?): *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 19. Coin type with standard imperial titulature and a depiction of Serapis with scepter: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 600. According to De Blois these types were struck to celebrate the fact that Egypt had been won back from the Persians (see De Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus*, p. 135).

⁹⁴ VESTA (probably referring to Salomina): *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 290. VESTA FELIX: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 518.

⁹⁵ IANO PATRI: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 45.

⁹⁶ DEO VOLCANO: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 633.

⁹⁷ On the 'animal series' see Weigel, "Gallienus' 'animal series' coins and Roman religion", pp. 135–143 and De Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus*, pp. 160–164.

⁹⁸ Centaur: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 163, 164, 558. Gryphon: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 26, 165, 166. Pegasus: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 167.

⁹⁹ Doe: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 176 and 177. Stag: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 178 and 179. Antelope: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 180 and 181. Goat: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 182. Boar: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 183.



Image 26 'Animal' coin of Gallienus (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 166)

the legend of three types in combination with a depiction of a hippocamp or capricorn.¹⁰⁰ The same number of surviving types was each dedicated to Sol and Liber; the coin types presenting Sol as *conservator* show either Pegasus or a bull whereas on the three coin types bearing the legend LIBERO P CONS (AVG) a panther (or a leopard) is shown.¹⁰¹ There are, however, two types listed in the *RIC* with the legend SOLI CONS/COMTI AVG and one type bearing the legend SOLI COMTI AVG, all depicting Pegasus.¹⁰² It seems more sensible to group these types together with the other coin types from the animal series since animals are also depicted on these types and, although *comes* communicates a more intimate relationship between deity and ruler than *conservator* does, the respective significance of the terms *comes* and *conservator* are mutually related.¹⁰³ In addition, two coin types name Hercules as *conservator* and display either a lion or a wild boar.¹⁰⁴ Finally, Jupiter, Juno, and Mercury are named *conservator* or *conservatrix* on one type each; the coins labeling Jupiter and

¹⁰⁰ *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 244, 245, 246.

¹⁰¹ Pegasus: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 282, 357. Bull: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 285.

¹⁰² SOLI CONS/COMTI AVG: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 283 and 284. SOLI COMTI AVG: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 583.

¹⁰³ On *comes* see Nock, "The emperor's divine *comes*", pp. 102–116; Possenti, "Le divinità comites", pp. 141–170; above, p. 111. See further De Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus*, p. 161.

¹⁰⁴ Lion: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 201. Wild boar: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 202.

Juno as *conservator* or *conservatrix* depict a goat while the Mercury type shows a hippocamp.¹⁰⁵

The reason why these deities are grouped together as *conservatores* on Gallienus' coins is the subject of scholarly debate. According to De Blois, the particular deities were selected in order to strengthen Gallienus' position among the troops.¹⁰⁶ Weigel, however, refutes this assertion by demonstrating a link between these nine deities and traditional Roman religious practices.¹⁰⁷ Because of this connection, 'it seems more likely that Gallienus's 'animal series' was intended to focus attention primarily on gods who had to come to Rome's defence repeatedly in the past and whose cults featured *Graecus ritus* sacrifices and celebration with *ludi circenses*'.¹⁰⁸ Gallienus' coins, then, probably announced a 'major religious festival that both secured protection of the gods and gained popular support with circus games'.¹⁰⁹ The latter explanation for the selection of these particular deities on Gallienus' coins is in my view the most satisfying: the legionary coins together with the large number of types propagating *fides militum* and other coins referring directly to the army were aimed specifically at strengthening the emperor's position among the troops, and were probably the most effective means thereof.¹¹⁰ However, the same assumption underlies both authors' interpretations of the 'animal series', namely that the grave problems of Gallienus' sole reign provoked the issuance of the animal series. The other *conservator* coins, which do not belong to the animal series, should be interpreted in the same light,¹¹¹ the minting of these types can also be linked to the problems characteristic of the period 260–268. After all, as already mentioned before, the variety of gods acting as *conservator* on coin types issued during Gallienus' sole reign seem to reflect the crisis that the Empire faced from 260 to 268.

The large number of *conservator* coins also links up with Gallienus' reputed religious interests. According to Porphyry, Gallienus and his wife

¹⁰⁵ Jupiter: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 207. Juno: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 224. Mercury: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 242.

¹⁰⁶ De Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus*, p. 161.

¹⁰⁷ Weigel, " 'Gallienus' 'animal series' coins and Roman religion", pp. 135–143.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 136.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

¹¹¹ Jupiter: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 47, 107, 208–212, 384, 486, 487, 608, 614, 641. Mars: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 491. Apollo: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 168, 169, 382, 407, 415, 467, 468, 559. Juno: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 222. Aesculapius: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 172 and 632.

Salonina venerated the philosopher Plotinus, the founder of Neoplatonism.¹¹² Gallienus seems to have adhered Plotinus' views on kingship, rooted in Pythagoreanism, which encompassed the notion of a divinely inspired king who occupied an intermediate position between the Supreme God and the world he had to protect.¹¹³ Inscriptions in which Gallienus is represented as 'the most merciful princeps Gallienus, whose unconquerable manly virtue is only surpassed by his piety', the 'invincible lord Augustus through which he has defended and protected his own world' or 'the unconquerable god-fearing and lucky emperor Gallienus who is like the gods in his mind and countenance' might testify to this.¹¹⁴ This divinely inspired king, moreover, was assisted by supernatural assistants, *dei conservatores* or *comites*. Gallienus' animal series, figuring many divine helpers who were of high value in these times of crisis, could then probably be understood in the light of Gallienus' own religious views.

Among the deities that were represented as *conservator* or *conservatrix* on coin types struck during Gallienus' sole reign, six gods and two goddesses, namely Jupiter, Mars, Diana, Apollo, Sol, Neptune, Juno, and Mercury, assumed other functions as well. Jupiter,¹¹⁵ Diana,¹¹⁶ Apollo,¹¹⁷ Neptune,¹¹⁸ and Juno,¹¹⁹ functioned mainly as *conservator* or *conservatrix*, and Sol also appeared as *comes*. The majority of coin types honoring Mars, in contrast, emphasize Mars' capacity as war god (by naming or

¹¹² Porphyry, *Vita Plotini* 12.

¹¹³ L. de Blois, "Traditional virtues and new spiritual qualities in third century views of empire, emperorship and practical politics", *Mnemosyne* 47.2 (1994), pp. 166–176; pp. 175–176; L. de Blois, "Plotinus and Gallienus", in: A.A.R. Bastiaansen, A. Hilhorst, C.H. Kneepkens eds., *Fructus centesimus. Mélanges offerts à Gerard J.M. Bartelink à l'occasion de son soixante-cinquième anniversaire* (Steenbrugge, 1989), pp. 69–82; pp. 77–79.

¹¹⁴ *ILS* 548, 549 and 550.

¹¹⁵ Jupiter also appears as *propugnator* (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 48, 108, 213–215, 643), *stator* (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 49, 50, 109, 216–219, 488, 644, 645), and *ultor* (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 51–53, 220, 221, 385, 386, 420). Furthermore, coins bearing the legends IO CANTAB (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 573), referring to a Spanish people (see p. 107) and IOVI PATRI (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 642) were struck.

¹¹⁶ Also minted during Gallienus' sole reign were types bearing the legend LVNA LVCIFERA (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 235, 609, 646) and DIANA FELIX (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 29, 30, 174, 175, 444, 473).

¹¹⁷ One coin type bearing the legend APOLLI/APOLLINI PAL (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 631) is attested for Gallienus' sole reign.

¹¹⁸ For Neptune, a coin type bearing a legend consisting of standard imperial titula-ture and depicting the god with his foot on a prow and a trident in hand is listed in *RIC* (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 603).

¹¹⁹ Juno also appears as IVNO REGINA on one coin type (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 223).

showing Mars as *propugnator*, *pacifer*, *ultor*, *victor*),¹²⁰ whereas Sol conveys invincibility on seven out of 13 types.¹²¹ Finally, among the two types dedicated to Mercury, one presents him as *conservator* and the other one bears the legend DONA AVG.¹²²

The attention that Gallienus' coinage paid to Jupiter, Mars, Diana, Apollo, Venus, Neptune, Juno, Minerva, Mercury, Vesta, Janus, and Vulcan, renders it obvious that he appealed mainly to traditional Roman gods during his sole rule. With the exception of Janus, these are the chief Roman deities.¹²³ Moreover, the representations of Liber, Aesculapius, and Serapis on Gallienus' coins recall Severan imagery.

Apart from the coins displaying the 'great gods', 25 types, issued during the sole reign and assigned to the category 'divine association', evoke performance of sacrifices,¹²⁴ whereas 14 types from the joint reign can be connected with sacrificing.¹²⁵ Out of these 25 types, ten refer to the *vota decennalia*, all of which recall Gallienus' decennial jubilee (taking place in 262).¹²⁶ One type bears the legend VOTA VICENNALIA, a reference to the *vota* performed for the following ten years of Gallienus' rule.¹²⁷ Furthermore, seven coin types bear the legend VOTIS, VOTIS X or VOTIS X ET XX.¹²⁸ These types evoke either the honoring of the *vota* made for the first ten years of Gallienus' reign, or the *vota* for the second ten years. Seven other types present the emperor as *sacerdos*.¹²⁹

¹²⁰ *Propugnator*: RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 57, 58, 237–240, 493. *Paciferus*: RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 56, 112, 236, 353, 370, 422, 492. *Ultor*: RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 650. *Victor*: RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 241 and 649. Mars depicted with spear and trophy: RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 151 and 152. Also minted during Gallienus' sole rule were coin types bearing the legends MARS AVG (RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 647) and MARS RED AVG (RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 648) as well as a coin type that bears a legend that consists of standard imperial titulature and portrays Mars and Rhea Silvia (RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 345).

¹²¹ INVICTVS: RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 119, 286, 611, 620, 639, 640, 658.

¹²² DONA AVG: RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 634.

¹²³ Only Ceres is absent.

¹²⁴ One type, minted during the sole reign, presents a sacrificing emperor and bears the legend PIETAS AVG. This type is assigned to the category 'virtues'.

¹²⁵ See above, pp. 285–286.

¹²⁶ *Vota decennalia*: RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 92, 333, 334, 406, 411, 440–442, 540, 597.

¹²⁷ RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 541.

¹²⁸ VOTIS: RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 335. VOTIS X: RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 93 and 598. VOTIS X ET XX: RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 94–96, 599.

¹²⁹ RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 4, 153, 458–462. One coin type bearing the legend PIETAS AVG and showing an image of the emperor sacrificing belongs to the category 'virtues' (RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 618; see p. 296).

2.3 *Saeculum aureum and virtues*

As with military representation and divine association, messages broadcast by coin types of Gallienus' sole reign in the category '*saeculum aureum*' exhibit continuity and change compared with messages on types from the same category issued during Valerian's and Gallienus' joint reign. During both phases of Gallienus' reign emphasis lay on propagating *pax*. Out of the 73 types from the joint reign that belong to the category '*saeculum aureum*', 15 propagate PAX AVGG and one type PAX PVBLICA.¹³⁰ As for Gallienus' sole reign, among the 139 types belonging to the category '*saeculum aureum*' 24 types bear the legend PAX AVGVSTI, three types propagate PAX PVBLICA, six mention VBIQUE PAX, and one bears the legend PAX FVNDATA.¹³¹ The propagation of *pax* could allude to the peace expected to result from contemporary military activities.

After *pax*, the concepts *felicitas*,¹³² *oriens* (in this context referring to a *saeculum novum*),¹³³ *laetitia*,¹³⁴ *securitas*,¹³⁵ and *salus* receive the most

¹³⁰ PAX AVGG: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 87, 88, 155–157, 190, 231, 232, 256, 274, 275, 389–392. PAX PVBLICA: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 233.

¹³¹ PAX AVGVSTI: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 14, 63, 115, 147, 255–259, 390, 391, 409, 426–429, 499–503, 575–577. PAX PVBLICA: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 64, 260, 430. VBIQUE PAX: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 72–74, 121, 359, 360. Two of these VBIQUE PAX types (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 74 and 359) and three VICTORIA AVGVSTI types (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 82, 87, 128) bear the remarkable feminine legend GALLIENAE AVGVSTAE on the obverse. Since only the reverses are discussed here, I leave these obverse legends out of consideration. On these remarkable obverses, see for instance L. van den Hengel, "Travestie op de troon. Het muntportret van 'Galliëna Augusta'", *TMA* 34 (2005), pp. 21–26. PAX FVNDATA: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 652.

¹³² *Felicitas* appears on 13 types from the joint reign and 14 types minted in the sole reign. FELICITAS AVGG, joint reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 1, 73, 134–136a), 210–212, 254, 266. FELICITAS SAECVLI, joint reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 74 and 29. FELICITAS AVG, sole reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 31, 32, 186–191, 350, 474, 542, 565, 566. FELICITAS PVBLICA, sole reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 192.

¹³³ ORIENS AVG(G) appears on nine types issued during the joint reign and on 16 types issued during the sole reign. ORIENS AVG(G), joint reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 86, 154, 229, 230, 273, 303, 387, 388, 445. ORIENS AVG, sole reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 62, 113, 114, 248–251, 354, 448, 451, 494–498. Since the term *oriens* is ambiguous and could also evoke the geographic east, these particular types also belong to the category 'geographical messages'.

¹³⁴ *Laetitia* appears on 14 types struck during the joint reign and on eight types from the sole reign. LAETIT TEMP, joint reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 24 and 384. LAETITIA AVG(G), joint reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 78–81, 144–146, 200, 269, 293, 441, 442. LAETITIA AVG, sole reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 54, 110, 225, 226, 421, 489, 490, 616.

¹³⁵ *Securitas* appears on six types issued during the joint reign and on 12 types minted during the sole reign. SECVRITAS AVGG, joint reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 168, 237–239. SECVRITAS ORBIS, joint reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 240

attention during both phases of Gallienus' rule.¹³⁶ Concerning *salus*, three types bearing the legend OB CONSERVATIONEM SALVTIS (AVGG) were issued only during Gallienus' sole rule.¹³⁷ These types belong to a larger series, which will be discussed below. *Spes publica*,¹³⁸ *bona fortuna*,¹³⁹ and *concordia* were also propagated during both phases of Gallienus' rule but on a smaller scale.¹⁴⁰

Naturally, differences between joint and sole reign are also apparent. First, whereas during the joint reign only one type propagating *libertas* was struck, 11 types emphasizing *libertas* were issued during the sole reign.¹⁴¹ The *libertas* types struck during the sole reign consist of four types bearing the legend LIBERTAS AVG, four with the legend OB LIBERTATEM RECEPTAM and three that read OB REDDIT LIBERT.¹⁴² The types bearing the legend OB LIBERTATEM RECEPTAM and OB REDDIT LIBERT, together with the types propagating OB CONSERVATIONEM SALVTIS (AVGG) (see above)¹⁴³

and 277. SECVRITAS AVG, sole reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 68, 277, 392, 431, 514. SECVR TEMPO, sole reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 513. SECVRIT ORBIS, sole reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 67, 278, 279, 432. SECVRITAS PVBLICA, sole reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 281 and 517.

¹³⁶ *Salus* appears on six coin types issued during the joint reign and 15 types minted during the sole reign. SALVS AVGG, joint reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos 166, 167, 397–399. SALVS PVBLICA, joint reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 401. SALVS AVGVSTI, sole reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 66, 117, 274–276, 511–512a, 542a, 581, 610, 657.

¹³⁷ *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 59, 144, 423. On 'AVGG' inscribed on coin types minted during the sole reign, see below, n. 143. See also above, p. 219.

¹³⁸ *Spes publica* appears on four types issued during the joint reign and on two types minted during the sole reign. SPES PVBLICA, joint reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 402, 403, 413, 414. SPES PVBLICA sole reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 544 and 584.

¹³⁹ *Bonae fortuna* is featured on two coin types issued during the joint reign and on three types struck during the sole reign. BONAE FORTVNAE, joint reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 412 and 412a. BONAE FORTVNAE, sole reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 443, 469, 561.

¹⁴⁰ *Concordia* appears on one coin type issued during the joint reign and on five minted during the sole reign. CONCORDIA AVGG, joint reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 130. CONCORDIA AVG, sole reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 8, 27, 471, 562, 563.

¹⁴¹ LIBERTAS AVGG, joint reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 85.

¹⁴² LIBERTAS AVG: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 231–234. OB LIBERTATEM RECEPTAM: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 60, 61, 145, 424. OB REDDIT LIBERT: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 146, 247, 425.

¹⁴³ Whether *conservatio salutis* points to the restoration of rule to the legitimate dynasty or to the salvation of the emperor from mortal danger is unclear. To Alföldi, the depiction of *Salus* on the reverses makes the latter solution the most obvious (see Alföldi, *Studien zur Geschichte der Weltkrise des 3. Jahrhunderts nach Christus*, p. 68). In addition, although Valerian and probably also Gallienus' sons Valerian Iunior (who was incorrectly labeled Augustus in inscriptions: see Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle*, p. 221) and Saloninus were

and OB CONSERVATIONEM PATRIAE,¹⁴⁴ can be dated to 263 and probably celebrated the victory over an ‘anti-emperor’ (possibly Postumus).¹⁴⁵ The ordinary *libertas* types struck during the sole reign could probably be interpreted similarly, as celebrating the restoration of the Empire’s unity.

Exceptional among all third-century coin types, is Gallienus’ cluster of formulae propagating OB LIBERTATEM RECEPTAM, OB REDDIT LIBERT, OB CONSERVATIONEM SALVTIS (AVGG), and OB CONSERVATIONEM PATRIAE. Since Augustus had first used an *ob*-formula on coin types bearing the legend OB CIVIS SERVATOS, Gallienus may simply have imitated this formula consciously in order to connect himself to the first *princeps*.¹⁴⁶

Another departure from the policy of the joint rule was the introduction of new *saeculum aureum* messages on coin types issued during the sole reign. Apart from the ‘*ob* series’, coin types propagating *uberitas*,¹⁴⁷ *abundantia*,¹⁴⁸ *bonus eventus*,¹⁴⁹ *fides*,¹⁵⁰ and *fortuna* were introduced between 260 and 268.¹⁵¹ Although we must keep in mind that more *saeculum aureum* types were minted during the sole reign than in the joint reign, a greater variety of *saeculum aureum* types is attested for Gallienus’ sole reign.

The same can be said for the coin types in the category ‘virtues’. Whereas only five virtues, namely *virtus*, *liberalitas*, *providentia*, *aequitas*, and *pietas*, appear on coin types issued during Valerian’s and Gallienus’ joint reign, eight – *virtus*, *providentia*, *indulgentia*, *pietas*, *aequitas*, *liberalitas*, *clementia*, and *pudicitia* – were propagated on coin types from Gallienus’ sole reign. During both periods the emphasis lay on *virtus*: out of 95 virtues types issued during the joint reign, 48 propagated *virtus* while, among the 141 virtues types attested for the sole reign, 78 display *virtus* in

already dead by the time these types were struck, the legend shows AVGG on some types. Either the mint-masters made a mistake, which is in my view the most probable explanation, or AVGG refers to Gallienus and his wife (Alföldi, *Studien zur Geschichte der Weltkrise des 3. Jahrhunderts nach Christus*, p. 68).

¹⁴⁴ OB CONSERVATIONEM PATRIAE: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 143.

¹⁴⁵ Alföldi, *Studien zur Geschichte der Weltkrise des 3. Jahrhunderts nach Christus*, pp. 57–72; De Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus*, p. 131.

¹⁴⁶ See further De Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus*, p. 131. Augustus was followed by his successors in using the phrase OB CIVIS SERVATOS on imperial coins.

¹⁴⁷ *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 71, 120, 135, 287, 358, 585.

¹⁴⁸ *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 21, 97, 157, 346, 625.

¹⁴⁹ *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 470 and 560.

¹⁵⁰ *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 607.

¹⁵¹ *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 636.

the legend.¹⁵² Such emphasis on *virtus* was common for the propaganda on coins minted from the reign of Gordian III onward, and Gallienus fits perfectly in the picture.¹⁵³ Four types from the joint reign and 15 from the sole reign connect *virtus* directly with the emperor through the legend VIRTVS GALLIENI AVGVSTI.¹⁵⁴ Furthermore, *virtus militum* appears on two types, one issued during the joint reign and the other from the sole reign.¹⁵⁵ The legend VIRTVS FALERI appears only on one coin type issued during the sole rule.¹⁵⁶ With this type, Gallienus refers to his blood ties linking him with the influential *gens Egnatia*, stemming from Falerii (Etruria); Egnatius Victor, who held a consulate in 207, presumably had a daughter, (Egnatia) Mariniana, who married Valerian and was Gallienus' mother. Apparently, Gallienus wanted to link his *virtus* to his matrilineal descent from the Egnatii in order to strengthen his position both militarily and dynastically.¹⁵⁷ Another possibility is that he wanted to tighten his relationship with Italia by broadcasting this kind of message. The imagery on this particular type consists of a quiver, lion's skin, club, vase and bow, thus evoking Hercules.

Among the other *virtus* types issued during Gallienus' sole reign, 25 depict the emperor (on one type the emperor is depicted as Mars), 19 types present a soldier, 16 portray Hercules, 14 an image of Mars, and on two types there appears a trophy between captives.¹⁵⁸ Out of the *virtus* types issued during the joint reign, 21 show a soldier, while the emperor is depicted on 12 types (both emperors being shown on two), Mars is present on eight types, six depict either Romulus or the emperor, and Hercules appears on only one type. Thus, whereas during the joint reign the image of a soldier appears most frequently on *virtus* types, the emperor himself was depicted

¹⁵² *Virtus*, joint reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 53–59, 64, 99–105, 114, 114a), 181–187a), 197–199, 246–249, 257, 286, 301, 305, 407–411, 423, 424, 454–458. *Virtus*, sole reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 5, 6, 16, 17, 88–91, 131–134, 149, 312–332, 364, 365, 378–380, 403–405, 438, 439, 529–539, 589–596, 612, 623, 624, 667–676, 678.

¹⁵³ See above, p. 171.

¹⁵⁴ VIRT GALLIENI AVG, joint reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 53–55, 64. VIRTVS GALLIENI AVGVSTI, sole reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 5, 6, 17, 88, 149, 312–315, 364, 378, 403, 529–530a.

¹⁵⁵ *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 411. *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 332.

¹⁵⁶ *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 596.

¹⁵⁷ De Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus*, p. 134. On Gallienus' descent from the Egnatii see Birley, *The Roman Government of Britain*, p. 358; Mennen, *Status and power*, pp. 25–26 and pp. 100–103. See also above, p. 178.

¹⁵⁸ On the propagation of *virtus* on Gallienus' coins see Hekster and Manders, "Kaiser gegen Kaiser", pp. 135–144.

most frequently on *virtus* types issued during the sole reign. A possible explanation for this discrepancy would be a need to attain the legions' support during the joint reign (as demonstrated by the contemporary legionary series), whereas emphasis lay on presenting Gallienus as the right (military) man in the right place during his sole reign.

Besides *virtus*, the virtues *liberalitas*, *providentia*, *aequitas*, and *pietas* were propagated on coin types issued during both phases of Gallienus' reign. Whereas the attention paid to *providentia*,¹⁵⁹ *aequitas*,¹⁶⁰ and *pietas* is comparable during both periods,¹⁶¹ the importance attached to *liberalitas* differed fundamentally between joint and sole reign. Whereas 23 coin types emphasizing the emperor's *liberalitas* were issued in the joint reign, only six types propagating *liberalitas* are attested for Gallienus' sole rule.¹⁶² Apparently, during his sole reign the emperor was more interested in maintaining his soldiers' favor by emphasizing his *virtus* than in gaining the people's loyalty by advertizing *liberalitas*.

The virtues *indulgentia*,¹⁶³ *clementia (temporum)*,¹⁶⁴ and *pudicitia* are only presented on types from Gallienus' sole reign.¹⁶⁵ Among these three virtues, *indulgentia* was advertised most frequently (on 12 coin types). *Pudicitia*, propagated on one coin type, refers to Salonina, Gallienus' wife.¹⁶⁶ Unfortunately, the *indulgentia* types are undated, which makes it difficult to explain the frequent occurrence of this virtue on Gallienus' coins. This frequency is exceptional: in the third century, *indulgentia* only appeared on coin types issued by Septimius Severus, Caracalla, Severus Alexander, Maximinus Thrax, Florian, Probus, and Carus. Since Valerian persecuted the Christians on a large scale and Gallienus immediately put an

¹⁵⁹ *Providentia*, joint reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 89, 90, 158–163, 188, 276, 395, 461. *Providentia*, sole reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 65, 116, 266–271, 371, 508–510, 619, 653.

¹⁶⁰ *Aequitas*, joint reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 288, 436–439, 462. *AEQVITAS* AVG, sole reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 23, 98, 159, 347, 464, 553, 626, 627, 679. *AEQVITAS PVBLICA*, sole reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 1.

¹⁶¹ *PIETAS* AVGG, joint reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 191, 295, 446, 447. *PIET* SAECVLI, joint reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 393 and 394. *CONSERVAT P(I)ETAT*, sole reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 171, 171a. *PIETAS* AVG, sole reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 261–264, 449, 505–507, 578, 579, 618.

¹⁶² *Liberalitas*, joint reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 82–84, 147–151, 220–224, 255, 270–272, 385, 386, 420, 431, 443, 444. *Liberalitas*, sole reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 55, 111, 227, 228, 369, 387.

¹⁶³ *Indulgentia*: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 46, 106, 203–206, 368, 418, 419, 485, 546, 547.

¹⁶⁴ *Clementia*: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 100 and 170.

¹⁶⁵ *Pudicitia*: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 272.

¹⁶⁶ See *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 272.

end to this and granted them freedom of religion when he became sole ruler, it could be possible that the *indulgentia* types refer to this act of indulgence.

2.4 Other categories

As for the other categories, the largest differences mark the categories 'restitutor messages', 'unica', and 'aeternitas messages'. First, 17 types were minted during Valerian's and Gallienus' joint reign, presenting Gallienus as *restitutor*. Out of these 17 types, nine bear the legend RESTITVTOR GALLIARVM, six show the legend RESTITVTOR ORBIS, one type propagates RESTITVT ORIENTIS and another reads RESTITVT GENER HVMANI, probably referring to the inhabitants of the provinces.¹⁶⁷ The coins bearing the legend RESTITVTOR GALLIARVM all date to the period 256–259 which could imply that they refer to victories over German tribes, such as the Franks and the Alamanni, who invaded Gaul.¹⁶⁸ The coin type propagating *restitutor orientis* points probably to some successes against the Persians in the years 253–254.¹⁶⁹ As mentioned above, however, no coin types presenting the emperor as *restitutor* were struck during Gallienus' sole reign (see figure 38). Either Gallienus preferred other forms of propaganda, or proclaiming that the Empire/world had been restored conflicted too overtly with what was actually happening.

Second, 'unica' coins were only minted during Gallienus' sole reign (see figure 38). Four coin types bear a legend consisting of standard imperial titulature and show a lion with a bull's head between his paws or a radiate lion (sometimes with a bull's head between his paws).¹⁷⁰ One additional coin type displays the legend SPQR and depicts a lion with an eagle on his back.¹⁷¹ These types might refer to the victories which Odaenathus, Rome's ally, gained over the Persians, probably in 262–263 and 267.¹⁷² This hypothesis is strengthened by the thirteenth Sibylline Oracle's description of the

¹⁶⁷ RESTITVTOR GALLIARVM: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 27–35. RESTITVTOR ORBIS: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 91, 164, 165, 234–236. RESTITVT ORIENTIS: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 448. RESTITVT GENER HVMANI: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 296. See the discussion of *salus generis humani* coins above, pp. 216–218.

¹⁶⁸ De Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus*, p. 6.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁷⁰ Lion with bull's head between paws: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 604 and 605. Radiate lion: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 601. Radiate lion and bull's head between lion's paws: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 602.

¹⁷¹ *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 70.

¹⁷² See Hartmann, *Das palmyrenische Teilreich*, pp. 162–175 and pp. 211–216.

Persians as 'venom spitting beasts' who have been destroyed by Odaenathus, the 'sun-sent, dreadful, fearful lion, breathing much fire'.¹⁷³ Other coin types belonging to this category bear the legend ALACRITATI (AVG) and depict Pegasus.¹⁷⁴ These coin types might reflect Gallienus' speed of reactions in times of danger.¹⁷⁵ Finally, one coin type from the category 'unica' bears the legend IVBENTVS (LVBENTVS) AVG, probably meaning IVENTVS AVG, and portrays the emperor with Victory and spear.¹⁷⁶

Third comes the category 'aeternitas messages'. During Valerian's and Gallienus' joint rule, nine types were struck presenting *aeternitas* messages. Within these nine, five types bear the legend ROMAE AETERNAE, four types show the legend AETERNITAS AVGG in combination with either Sol (two types), Saturn (one type) or the emperor himself (one type).¹⁷⁷ During Gallienus' sole rule, however, 41 coin types communicated *aeternitas* messages. Fifteen of these types bear the legend AETERNITAS AVG. Accompanying these legends are images of Sol (ten types), the she-wolf suckling Romulus and Remus (three types), and Saturn (two types).¹⁷⁸ In addition, ten types propagating SECVRIT PERPETVA, seven types promoting VICTORIA AET (AVG), four displaying the legend PAX AETERNA (AVG), two types bearing the legend ROMAE AETERNAE, two propagating FELICITAS AET, and one type showing PERPETVITATI AVG were struck.¹⁷⁹ Thus, not only were more *aeternitas* types minted during Gallienus' sole reign, but the variety of *aeternitas* messages also increased. Such propagation of the eternity of safety, victory, peace, Rome and of happiness as well as the promotion of eternity in the abstract might have been aimed at maintaining the people's trust in, and thus loyalty to, their ruler amidst the Empire's contemporary calamities.

¹⁷³ *Oracula Sibyllina* 13.155–171. See further Hekster, *Rome and its Empire*, p. 24.

¹⁷⁴ *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 414 and 545.

¹⁷⁵ De Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus*, p. 144.

¹⁷⁶ *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 615.

¹⁷⁷ ROMAE AETERNAE: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 36, 297, 432, 433, 449. Sol: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 302 and 373. Saturnus: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 289. Emperor: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 69.

¹⁷⁸ Sol: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 24, 99, 160, 348, 465, 466, 465a, 555, 629, 630. Wolf: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 349, 628, 677. Saturnus: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 554 and 606.

¹⁷⁹ SECVRIT PERPETVA: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 69, 118, 280, 355, 356, 372, 452, 515, 516, 543. VICTORIA AET (AVG): *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 76, 123, 291, 297, 361, 373, 586. PAX AETERNA (AVG): *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 252–254, 408. ROMAE AETERNAE: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 654, 655. FELICITAS AET: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 185, 564. PERPETVITATI AVG: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 504.

Fourth, for dynastic representation, it is not surprising that the proportion of coin types belonging to this category decreased during the sole reign. After all, Gallienus' co-ruling father died in captivity and his two sons were also murdered toward the end or immediately at the beginning of the joint reign. Therefore, whereas the emphasis lay on *concordia Augustorum* during the joint reign,¹⁸⁰ the three dynastic types minted during Gallienus' sole reign propagate either *fecunditas* (two types) or depict Salonina (one type).¹⁸¹ It is obvious that the dynastic types issued during his sole reign respond to actual circumstances.

Fifth, types from the categories '*paradeigmata*', '*euergesia*', and 'geographical messages' exhibit only minor differences between joint and sole rule. Among '*paradeigmata*' on Gallienus' coinage, one type from Valerian's and Gallienus' joint rule bears the legend SPQR OPTIMO PRINCIPI.¹⁸² During Gallienus' sole rule two types were minted with the same legend and, more remarkably, so were two types propagating DEO AVGVSTO.¹⁸³ Whereas the *optimus princeps* types might allude to Augustus or Trajan, the *deus Augustus* types obviously linked Gallienus with the first *princeps*. De Blois places these *deus Augustus* types within a larger propaganda program promoting peace and prosperity, which almost every emperor from Augustus onward had launched.¹⁸⁴ However, Gallienus' other coin types that repackage Augustan forms of propaganda (the *ob*-formula types from the sole reign) and the rarity of these two coin types in the third century warrant, in my view, a slightly different interpretation for the *deus Augustus* types (and possibly also the *optimus princeps* types). They served to legitimize his power not by referring to peace or prosperity, but by associating Gallienus with his great deified predecessor; instead of proclaiming *saeculum aureum* indirectly, a divine connection, emphasizing imperial continuity, was promoted directly in order to secure Gallienus' power.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁰ Types emphasizing *concordia Augustorum*: RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 130, 131, 207, 208, 252, 264, 375, 435. One type (no. 435) has a military connotation too, depicting the two emperors face to face with a shield and two spears. Other dynastic types from the joint reign display either the legend SALONINA AVG or PRINCIPI IVVENTVT: RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 3 (Salonina) and 26 (*princeps iuventutis*).

¹⁸¹ *Fecunditas*: RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 101 and 184. Salonina: RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 4. In addition, one type minted during the sole reign bears the legend PRINC IVVENT (RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 265). According to RIC, this type refers to Valerian II who became Caesar in 256. Then, since Valerian II died in 258, this type is possibly a hybrid.

¹⁸² RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 37.

¹⁸³ S P Q R OPTIMO PRINCIPI: RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 393 and 659. DEO AVGVSTO: RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 9 and 28.

¹⁸⁴ De Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus*, pp. 121 and 124.

¹⁸⁵ Kuhoff, *Herrschartum und Reichskrise*, p. 56.

Thus, the difference between joint and sole reign is that, whereas during the joint reign Gallienus' coins made no or only an implicit reference to Augustus (whether the *optimus princeps* type refers to Augustus or Trajan being unclear), he explicitly associated himself with (*deus*) Augustus in his sole reign.

Sixth, Gallienus' *'euergesia'* types from Valerian's and Gallienus' joint reign consisted of eight types propagating *moneta* and three emphasizing *annona*.¹⁸⁶ On the other hand, the sole rule produced 12 *'euergesia'* types bearing the legend MONETA AVG and five showing the inscription ANNONA AVG/AVGG. In addition, two types propagating SAECVLARES AVG were struck only in the last phase of Gallienus' rule.¹⁸⁷ The latter types allude probably not to (the intention of organizing) real secular games because 'the timing of his reign was not close enough to make even a bogus claim for hosting such games', but perhaps to a major religious festival which took place late in his reign.¹⁸⁸ These two types, then, might be seen as complements to the animal series, which also hints at the organization of a religious festival in Gallienus' sole reign.¹⁸⁹

Seventh, the majority of coin types from the joint and sole reigns propagating geographical messages bore the ambiguous legend ORIENS AVG/AVGG (nine types attested in the joint reign and 16 from the sole reign). These types thus referred both to the (problems/military activities in the) geographical orient and to the dawning of a golden age (see above, pp. 127–128).¹⁹⁰ The remaining geographical types from both joint and sole reign display either SALVS ITAL (joint reign) or SISCIA AVG (sole reign).¹⁹¹ The legend SISCIA AVG alludes probably to the mint situated there, which Gallienus opened.¹⁹²

Finally, coin types from the categories 'elevation' and 'non-specific representation' spread identical messages in both periods of Gallienus' reign. From the representational form 'elevation', all coin types propagate

¹⁸⁶ MONETA AVGG: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 109–113, 202, 203, 204. ANNONA AVGG: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 202–204.

¹⁸⁷ MONETA AVG: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 2, 136–142, 243, 381, 388, 389. ANNONA AVG(G): *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 25, 161, 162, 556, 557. SAECVLARES AVG: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 273, 656.

¹⁸⁸ Weigel, "Gallienus' 'Animal Series' coins", p. 140.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid. Cf. De Blois, *The Policy of the Emperor Gallienus*, p. 128.

¹⁹⁰ ORIENS AVG/AVGG, joint reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 86, 154, 229, 230, 273, 303, 387, 388, 445. ORIENS AVG, sole reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 62, 113, 114, 248–251, 354, 448, 451, 494–498. See also above, p. 292 with n. 133.

¹⁹¹ SALVS ITAL: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 400. SISCIA AVG: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 582.

¹⁹² *RIC* V.1, pp. 17 and 22.

either *Fortuna redux* (four types issued in the joint reign and 17 in the sole reign), which can be associated with the emperor's safe return to Rome, or *Genius Augusti* (one type struck in the joint reign and five in the sole reign).¹⁹³ As for the category 'non-specific representation', all types from both phases bear standard imperial titulature and portray the emperor with globe and scepter.¹⁹⁴

3. CONCLUSIONS

When the coin types minted during Gallienus' entire reign (253–268) are examined together, the proportions of these types in the 13 representational categories resembles that of the representational categories of the coin types minted from 193 to 284 as a whole, with only minor differences. However, a distinction between co-rule and sole rule generates a more diachronically nuanced picture of representational policies during Gallienus' reign.¹⁹⁵ Change and continuity emerge between the two periods, but change is dominant, especially in 'military representation' and 'divine association'.

Compared to the obvious shifts, more subtle differences between co-rule and sole rule are visible in the specific messages propagated on the coins belonging to the four major representational categories. Among messages propagating 'divine association', 'military representation', '*saeculum aureum*', and 'virtues', similarities between the two phases of Gallienus' reign seem to predominate. However, changes are visible

¹⁹³ *Fortuna redux*, joint reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 75, 139, 140, 292. *Fortuna redux*, sole reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 42, 43, 103–105, 193–195, 351, 352, 482–484, 572, 613, 637. *Genius Augusti*, joint reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 427. *Genius Augusti*, sole reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 44, 197, 198, 383, 638.

¹⁹⁴ Joint reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 122, 201, 259, 310–312. Sole reign: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 155, 156, 455–457, 550. Six additional types, all issued during Gallienus' sole reign, are assigned to the category 'uncertain'. Five of these bear standard imperial titulature and show the emperor in a *quadriga* (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 20, 150, 154, 412, 413). Although the *quadriga* is not explicitly called triumphal, nor does the emperor wear military attire or carry military attributes, nor is any soldier or Victoria visible, these types may still stress the emperor's military capacity without elevating him beyond human status; this *argumentum ex silentio* offers no compelling reason to assign these types to the category 'elevation'. The remaining type, irreducible to one of the 13 representational categories, bears the legend GALLIENVS AVG and shows, according to *RIC*, either Mars or the emperor with branch or *patera* (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 196). This uncertainty in identifying the image prevents assignment of this coin type to the category 'elevation' or 'non-specific representation'.

¹⁹⁵ As with the analysis of Caracalla's coin types issued during joint and sole reign (see chapter six).

behind this apparent similarity. First, during both joint and sole rule, emphasis within the category 'military representation' lay both on propagating *victoria* and on references to the armed forces. Yet, during Valerian's and Gallienus' joint reign specific military victories as well as the support of specific military units were advertised most frequently, whereas the sole reign shows coins' emphasis shifted to *victoria* in general and to the loyalty of the army as a whole. Second, connections with the divine were propagated in both periods, mainly through references to deities on the coins. However, more different deities were depicted on Gallienus' coins from his sole reign, and among these deities an astonishing number assumed the function of *conservator* (11 in the sole reign against two in the joint reign). Third, among messages hinting at *saeculum aureum*, the continuity appears in references to *pax* (and to *felicitas*, *oriens*, *laetitia*, *securitas*, and *salus* to a lesser extent), whereas the special attention to *libertas* and a greater variety of types in the sole reign evince change. Fourth, concerning coin types belonging to the category 'virtues', messages propagating *virtus* dominated both phases; differences came in the attention paid to *liberalitas* during the joint reign and the greater variety of types during the sole reign.

As for the remaining categories, changes were more conspicuous than continuity. The contents of dynastic messages differed from period to period, the variety of types belonging to the categories '*aeternitas* messages', '*paradeigmata*', and '*euergesia*' increased during the sole reign, *restitutor* messages disappeared in the sole reign, and unique messages are only attested for the last phase of Gallienus' rule.

In conclusion, the changes between the two phases of Gallienus' rule in the share of the representational categories in joint and sole rule as well as the propagation of specific messages are remarkable. Although continuity must not be overlooked, this shift in imperial representation which runs parallel to the transition from joint to sole rule could reflect the influence of the senior Augustus (Valerian) on the junior Augustus' coins during the co-rule and Gallienus' own preferences for coins issued during his sole reign. However, whether or not Gallienus was influenced by his father during the co-rule and could only pursue his own preferences during his sole rule, it is obvious that many choices about imperial representation during his sole reign responded to contemporary trends, namely the problems with which emperor and Empire had to cope mainly during the last phase of Gallienus' rule. Thus, the propaganda on his coins joined his reforms as tactics for handling the multitude of difficulties with which Gallienus was confronted during his rule.

CONCLUSION

This book has aimed to uncover patterns according to which emperors reigning in the period A.D. 193–284 represented themselves through their coins. Imperial coinage was the vehicle of imperial communications *par excellence*; its messages were disseminated uninterruptedly and reached a large audience. The presence or absence of patterns in third-century imperial representation on imperial coinage can demonstrate the diachronic development of strategies for representing power through this medium. In order to do so, 13 different representational categories were distinguished within a database encompassing 8227 coin types. The categories formed the basis of further analysis, both at the macro and micro level. As to the macro level, analyses are made of the diachronic development of the most common styles of third-century imperial representation, namely divine association, military representation, the propagation of virtues and *saeculum aureum*. The investigation at the micro level comprises analyses of the ways Caracalla, Decius and Gallienus – emperors who had issued a considerable number of coin types, were dispersed chronologically relatively well and were representative (i.e. not unique) – presented themselves on their coinage.

Investigation suggests that two factors influenced the propagation of messages on third-century imperial coinage heavily, namely contemporary circumstances and imagery. As to the factor first mentioned, the relationship between image and reality at the macro level becomes manifest most clearly by the various representational changes that took place in the second half of the third century. Changes in imperial representation seem to have paralleled the cumulation of the third-century difficulties; as the problems increased, the emperors reformed their representation.

Many examples, derived from quantitative analysis of third-century coin types, testify to changes of specific types of representation in the second half of the third century. First, the relative frequency of coin types displaying the most popular forms of third-century representation fluctuated; differences emerge between the proportions of such coin types issued by the emperors reigning in the first half and emperors reigning in the second half of the century. From 253 onward fluctuations diminished between the numbers of military coin types issued during various emperors' reigns. The attention paid to divine association on third-century

coinage remained more stable from Trebonianus Gallus to Numerian compared to the period from Pertinax to Hostilian. Virtues were represented more often and more consistently from Herennius Etruscus onward. As for the propagation of a golden age, the mean percentage of coin types communicating a *saeculum aureum* was higher for the second half of the third century (Decius to Numerian) than for the first half of the third century (Pertinax to Philippus Arabs).

Second, from the second half of the third century onward the relative frequency of sub-forms of divine association, the propagation of virtues and of *saeculum aureum* changed. With regard to divine association, changes in the representation of Jupiter, Hercules, Sol, Apollo and the emperor as a priest are the most obvious. Jupiter's and Hercules' prominence rose strikingly from Aemilian's reign onward, Sol became a fixture on imperial coinage from Valerian onward and Apollo reclaimed his position between 250 and 275, although he disappeared from imperial coins after 275. The emperor was depicted fulfilling his priestly duties less frequently after Claudius Gothicus, while from the reign of the same emperor onward the title *pontifex maximus* appeared less often on imperial coinage. In general it seems possible to state that the representation of the emperor as a priest decreased in the second half of the third century and that the representation of gods increased from the second half of the third century. As for the propagation of virtues, the most obvious changes took place in the propagation of *providentia*, *liberalitas* and *virtus*. *Providentia* became a fixture on the coinage from Hostilian's reign onward, and hardly any attention was paid to *liberalitas* after Decius' reign. In addition, the most intense propagation of *virtus* paralleled the increase of third-century problems. Concerning the propagation of prosperous times, from the reign of Valerian onward, every emperor used the slogan *felicitas* and from Hostilian onward the number of emperors referring to *salus* on their coins increased.

Besides these changes in the frequency of (sub-)forms of imperial representation, change is also visible at the level of the messages themselves. First, from the reign of Valerian onward, the content of references to the armed forces in general varied more widely. Second, following Valerian's reign, the personification Virtus no longer appeared on types with the legend VIRTUS AVG/AVGG. Third, *virtus* types picturing Mars or an individual soldier were only incidentally minted in the period 193–253, whereas from the reign of Valerian and Gallienus onward they were issued near-continuously. Fourth, Hercules was only displayed on *virtus* types of Gordian III in the first half of the third century, whereas he appears on types

of Aemilian, Gallienus, Aurelian, Probus, Carinus, and Numerian in the second half of the century. Fifth, the message SALVS PVBLICA was increasingly propagated from Valerian's emperorship onward.

Alongside the differences visible between the first and the second half of the century, i.e. modifications in imperial representation that seem to have paralleled the increase of third-century problems, the relationship between image and reality at the macro level was reflected more or less closely in other ways. Reflecting the militaristic character of the period, military coin types, promoting the emperor as *imperator*, emphasizing victory (especially types propagating specific victories) or referring directly to the armed forces, as well as types displaying Mars, Jupiter Victor and Jupiter Stator were issued continually from 193 to 284. In addition, whereas coin types propagating ORIENS AVG/AVGG and displaying Sol symbolized *saeculum aureum*, they could also be associated with military activities in the East. Also, until 235 the issuance of *liberalitas* types can be linked to contemporary distributions of money to the *plebs urbana*. Later in the third century, however, *liberalitas* was not propagated on coinage anymore, even though distributions of money to citizens in Rome continued. Finally, coin types bearing the legends FELICITAS EXERCITI, PAX EXERCITI and SALVS MILITVM mirrored the increasing power of the troops, and the personalization of *salus* probably had a relation with personal threats of specific emperors.

The analyses of third-century coin types at the micro level might also point to the influence of contemporary circumstances on numismatically broadcast messages. Under Caracalla, the peculiar Pluto types (and Serapis- as well as Isis types) issued under his reign may have publicized the consequences of the *Constitutio Antoniniana*, while the twelve *libertas* types issued in 213 referred either to Geta's death in 211 or to the promulgation of the Caracallan constitution in 212. Types bearing the legend INDVLGENTIA AVGG IN CARTH and displaying images of the goddess Dea Caelestis probably reflect a specific favor bestowed upon Carthage, such as the grant of *ius Italicum* to the city or an imperial donation for the building of an aqueduct. Also reflecting current circumstances under Caracalla were types referring to specific victories. In addition, types displaying a galley and a bridge might allude to contemporary military activities such as the passage to Britain or the East.

Issued under Decius were the extraordinary military coin types propagating GENIVS EXERCITVS ILLVRICIANI and EXERCITVS INLVRICVS [*sic*]. All three of the possible explanations for these coin types reflect contemporary circumstances. First, these types could communicate

public thanks on the emperor's behalf to the troops who had appropriated the imperial purple for him. Second, the types might have aimed to secure the loyalty of specific military units whose loyalty was needed for Decius' battle against Germanic tribes. Third, these coins might have been minted to secure the loyalty of those troops who played a leading role in electing emperors and in military activities. In addition, Decius' coins that propagate VICTORIA GERMANICA and the emperor's *adventus* could point respectively to a victory over the Goths and to his arrival in Rome after his victory over Philippus Arabs.

As for Gallienus, many examples can be adduced of image reflecting reality, both for his sole and during the joint reign with his father, such as the propagation of specific victories, the increase of military-, virtues- and *saeculum aureum* types as military activities were increasing (255–259), and *saeculares* types. The representational changes from joint to sole reign, however, reveal the link between image and reality most clearly. From the capture of Valerian onward, problems kept arising for Gallienus until his death in 268. These problems were largely reflected by representation that shifted from joint to sole reign. The extraordinarily large number of deities presented as *conservator* on coin types issued between 260 and 268 reflects the contemporary crises most clearly.

Not all messages propagated through third-century coins can be associated solely with current circumstances. The other factor influencing third-century propaganda was imagery itself; image could react to image. At the macro level this becomes clear in the first place through recurring themes on third-century coinage. In military representation, the continuous issuance of three kinds of military coin types – types displaying the emperor as *imperator*, emphasizing victory and referring directly to the troops – appears to betray reactions to imagery to some extent. The issuance of victory types seems particularly to have remained the prevailing standard for rulers in the third century. Within the category 'divine association', the display of Jupiter, Hercules, Mars, Sol and Apollo provides a good example; these deities were emphasized by most third-century emperors. In addition, the recurrence of specific guises of these deities throughout the period 193–284 suggests the influence of tradition too. As for the propagation of virtues, the fact that *providentia*, *liberalitas*, *virtus*, *pietas* and *aequitas* were the third-century core virtues almost inevitably implies that those deciding on coin types – clearly influenced by, or at least anticipating the wishes of, the emperor himself – were aware of the virtues promoted by imperial predecessors and that they adopted them

for their own visual program. Among these core virtues, the influence of tradition on the propagation of *aequitas* is the most obvious. Concerning the promotion of a golden age, *felicitas*, *pax*, *securitas* and *salus* were the most widespread messages on coin types brought into circulation between 193 and 284. Tradition clearly played a part here.

Image reacting to image at the macro level can be illustrated by more than just third-century emperors' adoption of predecessors' imagery. Some emperors, like Gallienus and Probus, copied propaganda from enemies for their own profit. By claiming the deity with whom Postumus associated himself, Gallienus tried to legitimize his power after Postumus' usurpation and after his unsuccessful attempt to eliminate the Gallic Empire. Probus, moreover, issued coins bearing the same legend and imagery as several of Postumus' Hercules coins, ostensibly in order to appeal to the troublesome Germans.

At the micro level, a pattern can be distinguished in how Decius and Gallienus reacted to propaganda of others. Both used propaganda that imitated messages broadcast by great predecessors. As for Decius, who had associated himself already with Trajan by adopting his name, his Dacia messages seem to revert to Trajan's Dacia propaganda, while his *divi* coins may emulate some of Trajan's restoration coins. Still, Decius' *divi* series should be considered highly innovative: the grouping together of eleven *divi* in one series of consecration coins was a novelty in the representation of imperial power. Gallienus, meanwhile, issued coins displaying the same peculiar *ob*-formula that Augustus had stamped onto some of his coins. Moreover, other coins of Gallienus refer explicitly to Augustus. With this imitation of earlier emperors' visual programs, both emperors seem to have presented themselves as heirs in some respects of these purportedly good past emperors.

Separate discussions of the two factors that influenced the propagation of third-century messages on coinage – reality and image – should not imply that they were mutually exclusive. Two examples may suffice. On the macro level, when considering the military coin types issued from 193 to 284, these types' continuous issuance reflects undoubtedly the military character of this period. Yet, the recurring themes on the military types issued in the third century also hint at the influence of tradition. On the micro level, there is a striking discrepancy between coin types of Valerian's and Gallienus' joint reign and Gallienus' sole reign. This may imply a reaction against (and thus a break with) Valerian's ideological policy, though Gallienus' own representational choices after 260 could still have

responded predominantly to reality, namely the multitude of problems with which he had to cope after Valerian's capture.

Apart from the aforementioned results about the diachronic development of imperial representation, analysis of third-century imperial coinage yields another important insight. At least for the third century, emperors disseminated unique visual programs through their coins. At the macro level this is demonstrated by turning points in the development of specific representational forms brought about by particular emperors. An example hereof is the turning point in the representation of Jupiter and Hercules that took place during Aemilian's reign. Also, exceptions to patterns in representation, i.e. peaks and low points attested for particular reigns, betray the varying interests of individual emperors. The peak in the representation of Sol visible for Aurelian's reign and the low point in military representation for Pertinax' reign illustrate this perfectly. Finally, coin types bearing exceptional messages – i.e. both types that are assigned to the representational category 'unica' and, for instance, deviating Jupiter types – demonstrate differing imperial choices as to representation.

The analysis at the micro level demonstrates the unique character of every emperor's representation even more clearly. When we compare the attention that Caracalla, Decius and Gallienus paid to different forms of representation during their reigns, it is striking how these emperors' subjects were confronted with three completely different imperial images. Association with the divine was most heavily emphasized on Caracalla's coins, the majority of Decius' coins broadcast military and geographical messages, and Gallienus issued coins propagating divine association, military representation, virtues and *saeculum aureum* in almost equal proportions. Furthermore, the representational differences between the joint and sole reigns of Caracalla and Gallienus also underscore the importance that should be attached to individual ideological decisions of third-century emperors. Caracalla's and Gallienus' representation during their sole reigns differed profoundly from their representational policies when they reigned together with their fathers. This dissimilarity implies varying degrees of attention to particular representational styles and differences in messages on coins displaying the same representational style. Especially in Caracalla's case, the discrepancy between joint and sole reign seems to reflect attempts to pursue personal ideological preferences and break away from the representational influence of the deceased co-Augustus.

Ideally, a more precise explanation would have been provided for so-called 'personal preferences' with regard to imperial representation. After

all, each emperor brought different socio-psychological backgrounds and different advisors to different historical situations, and so responded with different programs to their own individual situations. Yet, this book explores patterns in imperial representation in order to map its diachronic development. Examining the role of contingent historical contexts in detail, then, would have deviated too far from an investigation that focuses only on broad outlines. Sufficient for the aim of this book is the notion that the personal influence of each emperor on his coins should not be underestimated.

Finally, this book aims to show the advantages of a methodology based on the combination of a quantitative and qualitative analysis of coin types. Through a quantification of coin types, patterns and developments become clearly visible, whereas, by adding a qualitative research component to the analysis, results stemming from a statistical approach can be placed in the necessary contexts. In this way, it can illuminate previously obscure aspects of ancient Roman history.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX ONE

LIST OF EMPERORS AND USURPERS (A.D. 193–284)¹

Pertinax	193
Didius Julianus	193
Septimius Severus	193–211
Pescennius Niger	193–194
Clodius Albinus	193–197
Caracalla	198–217
Geta	209–211
Macrinus	217–218
Diadumenian	218
Elagabalus	218–222
Seleucus	?
Uranus	?
Gellius Maximus	?
...s Verus	?
Severus Alexander	222–235
L. Seius Sallustius	225(?)–227(?)
Taurinus	?
Ovinus Camillus	?
Maximinus Thrax	235–238
Magnus	235
(Titus) Quartinus	235
Gordian I	238
Gordian II	238
Balbinus	238
Pupienus	238
Gordian III	238–244
Sabinian	240
Philippus I	244–249
Philippus II	247–249
Pacatian	248

¹ Based on the list in Hekster, *Rome and its Empire*, pp. 155–156.

Iotapian	249
Silbannacus	?
Sponsian	?
Decius	249–251
L. (?) Priscus	250
Valens Licinian	250
Herennius Etruscus	251
Hostilian	251
Trebonianus Gallus	251–253
Volusian	251–253
Uranus Antoninus	253
Aemilian	253
Valerian	253–260
Gallienus	253–268
Saloninus	260
Ingenuus	?
Regalian	260 (?)
Macrian Senior	260–261
Macrian Junior	260–261
Quietus	260–261
Piso	261
Valens	261
Ballista	261
Mussius Aemilian	261–262
Memor	?
Aureolus	262–268
Claudius II Gothicus	268–270
Quintillus	270
Aurelian	270–275
Domitian II	271
Urban	271/2
Septimius	271/2
Felicissimus	271/2
Tacitus	275–276
Florian	276
Probus	276–282
Bonosus	280–281
Proculus	280–281
Carus	282–283
Carinus	283–285
Numerian	283–284

Gallic Empire (260–274)

Postumus 260–269

Laelian 269

Marius 269

Victorinus 269–271

Tetricus I 271–274

Tetricus II 273–274

Faustinus 273

Palmyran Empire (260?–272)

(Septimius Odaenathus 260–267/8)

Vaballathus 267–272

Zenobia 267–272

Antiochus 272

APPENDIX TWO

REFERENCES TO JUPITER, HERCULES, MARS, SOL AND APOLLO ON IMPERIAL COIN TYPES: EMPERORS AND CORRESPONDING *RIC*-NUMBERS

JUPITER:

1. *Septimius Severus*: *RIC* IV.1, nos. 34, 35, 48, 111A, 130, 131, 196, 204, 216, 226, 227, 233, 240, 243, 270–272, 396, 441B, 454, 464, 480a), 480b), 504A), 704, 707, 715, 722, 733, 790.
2. *Caracalla*: *RIC* IV.1, nos. 156, 200, 206A, 240, 258a)–260b), 275a)–278, 285a)–288, 301, 472a)–472c), 541a)–541c), 554B, 559a)–559c), 568a), 568b).
3. *Macrinus*: *RIC* IV.2, nos. 2, 5, 14–17, 28, 37, 71–77, 119, 120, 126, 134, 135, 136, 154, 185–192.
4. *Elagabalus*: *RIC* IV.2, nos. 27, 89–92.
5. *Severus Alexander*: *RIC* IV.2, nos. 4, 5, 18–20, 34, 35, 140–146, 195, 197–203, 234–241, 387, 423, 555, 556, 558–562, 628–634, 412, 413.
6. *Balbinus*: *RIC* IV.2, nos. 2, 13.
7. *Pupienus*: *RIC* IV.2, nos. 2, 12.
8. *Gordian III*: *RIC* IV.3, nos. 2, 8, 16, 21, 27, 50, 84, 85, 99, 100, 112, 118, 136, 170, 211, 255a), 255b), 298a)–298c), 299a), 299b).
9. *Aemilian*: *RIC* IV.3, nos. 4, 14, 45, 46, 57.
10. *Valerian*: *RIC* V.1, nos. 7, 8, 37–40, 92–95, 141, 143, 146, 147, 162, 163, 194, 195, 218.
11. *Gallienus*: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 20–23, 76, 77, 116, 143, 189, 215–219, 294, 393, 440 and *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 47–53, 107–109, 207–221, 384, 386, 420, 486–488, 573, 608, 614, 641–645.
12. *Claudius Gothicus*: *RIC* V.1, nos. 6, 51–55, 124, 130, 152, 211.
13. *Quintillus*: *RIC* V.1, nos. 21, 57, 84, 85.
14. *Aurelian*: *RIC* V.1, nos. 48, 49, 129–132, 174, 225–228, 259–269, 274, 275, 333, 342, 344, 346, 394, 395.
15. *Tacitus*: *RIC* V.1, nos. 16, 17, 54, 88, 133, 134, 190–194, 210–213.
16. *Florian*: *RIC* V.1, nos. 19, 32, 68–71, 117.
17. *Probus*: *RIC* V.2, nos. 152, 172–176, 315, 384–391, 643–648, 838–843, 856–859, 905, 920–924, 927, 928.
18. *Carus*: *RIC* V.2, nos. 38–40, 118, 123–125; possibly 128.

19. *Carinus*: RIC V.2, nos. 257–260, 314; possibly 314a, 323–327, 329.
20. *Numerian*: RIC V.2, nos. 409, 410; possibly 463, 466–470.

HERCULES:

1. *Septimius Severus*: RIC IV.1, nos. 25, 31, 79, 97, 111, 257, 488, 661, 666, 669, 761, 762, 763B, 764A, 765.
2. *Caracalla*: RIC IV.1, nos. 74a), 74b), 76, 192, 206a)–206c), 239, 418, 420–422, 430, 459, 508a)–508c).
3. *Geta*: RIC IV.1, nos. 155a), 155b).
4. *Gordian III*: RIC IV.3, nos. 95, 108, 110, 116, 120, 206, 309.
5. *Aemilian*: RIC IV.3, nos. 3a), 3b), 26, 44.
6. *Gallienus*: RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 454 and RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 5, 6, 16, 91, 201, 202, 327, 328, 331, 537, 539, 595, 623, 624, 671–673, 678.
7. *Claudius Gothicus*: RIC V.1, nos. 50, 203, 213.
8. *Aurelian*: RIC V.1, nos. 57, 58, 74, 318).
9. *Probus*: RIC V.2, nos. 4, 14, 70–72, 373–383, 576, 577, 585–588, 901, 902.
10. *Carus*: RIC V.2, no. 117.
11. *Carinus*: RIC V.2, nos. 233–235, 268, 269, 271, 272, 284, 291, 321.
12. *Numerian*: RIC V.2, nos. 407, 408, 439, 465.

MARS:

1. *Septimius Severus*: RIC IV.1, nos. 33, 45, 46, 52, 60, 65, 67, 70, 113–114A, 133A, 134, 151C, 324, 350D, 404–407, 436A, 443, 443A, 456–457A, 465, 487, 508, 509, 523A, 683, 687, 688, 694, 705, 708, 716, 723, 741.
2. *Caracalla*: RIC IV.1, nos. 80a), 80b), 81, 83, 88, 89, 100, 109a), 109b), 110, 115, 207, 222–223A, 235, 306, 307, 423, 434, 435, 442a), 442b), 447, 450a), 450b), 473, 490a)–490c), 492, 493a), 493b), 496a)–496c), 501, 504, 524a)–524c), 528a)–528e), 529, 531a)–532b).
3. *Geta*: RIC IV.1, nos. 152, 160a), 160b), 162a), 162b).
4. *Elagabalus*: RIC IV.2, nos. 119–123, 172, 362–364.
5. *Severus Alexander*: RIC IV.2, nos. 6, 7, 21–25, 36, 37, 45, 52, 53, 60–62, 71, 72, 74, 75, 82–84, 91–93, 107, 108, 124, 157–162, 195, 207, 244–248, 262, 266, 289, 388–390, 424–428, 440–442, 456–458, 472–475, 488, 584, 585, 635–638; possibly nos. 57, 476–478, 489, 490.
6. *Maximinus Thrax*: RIC IV.2, nos. 11, 55–57.
7. *Gordian III*: RIC IV.3, nos. 28, 167A, 207, 145–147, 162, 212, 332a)–333, 339a)–339c).
8. *Philippus I*: RIC IV.3, nos. 7, 152.
9. *Philippus II*: RIC IV.3, nos. 223, 263.

10. *Decius*: RIC IV.3, no. 128.
11. *Herennius Etruscus*: RIC IV.3, no. 150A.
12. *Hostilian*: RIC IV.3, no. 187.
13. *Trebonianus Gallus*: RIC IV.3, nos. 40, 84, 85.
14. *Volusian*: RIC IV.3, nos. 219, 220, 228.
15. *Aemilian*: RIC IV.3, nos. 5a), 5b), 6, 15.
16. *Valerian*: RIC V.1, nos. 169, 244, 272.
17. *Gallienus*: RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 5, 8, 10, 25, 56, 57, 67, 68, 102, 103, 152, 153, 184, 185, 186, 225, 246, 319 and RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 56–58, 89, 90, 112, 131, 132, 134, 151, 152, 236–241, 316–321, 329, 330, 345, 353, 364, 370, 422, 491–493, 591, 647–650 ; possibly no. 196.
18. *Claudius Gothicus*: RIC V.1, nos. 7, 65–74, 125–129, 172, 175.
19. *Quintillus*: RIC V.1, nos. 24, 25, 58, 59, 69, 70.
20. *Aurelian*: RIC V.1, nos. 1, 5, 15, 16, 33, 34, 97, 98, 112, 133, 156, 179–183, 186, 210, 270, 271, 357–359, 366, 378–380, 388, 393.
21. *Tacitus*: RIC V.1, nos. 12, 29–32, 83, 108, 109, 112, 145, 177, 178, 206, 214.
22. *Florian*: RIC V.1, nos. 14, 15, 20, 24, 72, 109.
23. *Probus*: RIC V.2, nos. 35–43, 57, 58, 82–89, 145, 146, 177, 226–228, 240–242, 281, 282, 304, 426–433, 470–472, 505–513, 540–544, 578, 602, 603, 699, 810–816.
24. *Carus*: RIC V.2, nos. 34, 65, 92, 93.
25. *Carinus*: RIC V.2, no. 270.
26. *Numerian*: RIC V.2, nos. 386–389, 402.

SOL:

1. *Septimius Severus*: RIC IV.1, nos. 101, 102, 115, 117, 217, 282, 489, 492, 742, 744, 749; possibly no. 287.
2. *Caracalla*: RIC IV.1, nos. 30, 39a), 39b), 40, 55A, 141, 163, 245, 264a)–265h), 281a)–282f), 293a)–294c), 407, 408a), 408b), 410, 412, 474, 543a), 543b), 551, 556, 562, 563, 566, 570.
3. *Geta*: RIC IV.1, no. 108.
4. *Elagabalus*: RIC IV.2, nos. 17, 28, 37–41, 63, 198, 289, 300–303, 318–320.
5. *Severus Alexander*: RIC IV.2, nos. 8, 76, 100–102, 106, 109–120, 122, 123, 125, 491, 500–504, 511–517, 525–532, 535–543.
6. *Gordian III*: RIC IV.3, nos. 31, 83, 97, 98, 109, 111, 117, 168, 213, 297a)–297c).
7. *Philippus II*: RIC IV.3, no. 226.
8. *Valerian*: RIC V.1, nos. 2, 10–13, 46, 47, 106, 107, 142, 142a), 144, 148, 170, 187, 198, 211, 228, 229, 232.

9. *Gallienus*: RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 86, 117, 119–121, 154, 229, 230, 273, 302, 303, 373, 387, 388, 445 and RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 24, 62, 99, 113, 114, 119, 160, 248–251, 282–286, 348, 354, 357, 448, 451, 465–466, 494–498, 555, 583, 611, 620, 629, 630, 639, 640, 658.
10. *Claudius Gothicus*: RIC V.1, nos. 16, 17, 76–78, 115, 116, 118, 153–155, 198, 221.
11. *Quintillus*: RIC V.1, nos. 7, 40, 56.
12. *Aurelian*: RIC V.1, nos. 6, 7, 17–20, 44, 54, 61–67, 75–82, 134–137, 150–154, 185, 187–189, 230, 246–257, 274–285, 307–318, 353, 357–365, 367, 371–375, 383–385, 387, 390, 397.
13. *Tacitus*: RIC V.1, nos. 52, 53, 195–198.
14. *Florian*: RIC V.1, nos. 7–9, 17, 18, 52, 110–115.
15. *Probus*: RIC V.2, nos. 3, 21–23, 44, 45, 101, 134, 135, 138, 168, 199–209, 267, 293, 294, 307–309, 311, 323, 324, 343, 344, 347–354, 392, 404–406, 414–422, 456, 536–538, 589, 590, 597, 669–673, 700, 767–785, 829, 835, 844–850, 861–874, 891, 911, 915.
16. *Carus*: RIC V.2, nos. 35, 36.
17. *Carinus*: RIC V.2, nos. 225, 262, 310.
18. *Numerian*: RIC V.2, nos. 381, 411, 412, 428, 429, 454.

APOLLO:

1. *Septimius Severus*: RIC IV.1, nos. 40, 47, 51, 59, 345, 682, 699.
2. *Caracalla*: RIC IV.1, nos. 238A, 254, 255, 459, 508a)–508c), 537.
3. *Geta*: RIC IV.1, nos. 155a), 155b), 184.
4. *Gordian III*: RIC IV.3, nos. 87–90, 96, 102–104, 114, 119, 301a)–304c).
5. *Herennius Etruscus*: RIC IV.3, nos. 153a), 153b).
6. *Hostilian*: RIC IV.3, nos. 189, 219.
7. *Trebonianus Gallus*: RIC IV.3, nos. 5, 19, 32, 103–104b), 118, 119.
8. *Volusian*: RIC IV.3, nos. 188, 247–248b).
9. *Aemilian*: RIC IV.3, nos. 1, 27, 43.
10. *Valerian*: RIC V.1, nos. 32, 71–76, 83–85, 152, 153, 190.
11. *Gallienus*: RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 6, 7, 125–129, 205, 206, 251, 261–263, 374, 416, 425 and RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 26, 163–169, 382, 407, 415, 467, 468, 558, 559, 610, 631.
12. *Claudius Gothicus*: RIC V.1, nos. 2, 20–23, 97, 216, 219, 220.
13. *Quintillus*: RIC V.1, nos. 8, 9, 44.
14. *Aurelian*: RIC V.1, nos. 22, 23, 66, 157, 160–162, 243.

APPENDIX THREE

REFERENCES TO OTHER DEITIES ON IMPERIAL COIN TYPES: EMPERORS AND CORRESPONDING *RIC*-NUMBERS

AESCULAPIUS:

1. *Septimius Severus*: *RIC* IV.1, nos. 205, 775a), 775b).
2. *Caracalla*: *RIC* IV.1, nos. 99, 238, 251–253, 270a)–270d), 538a)–539, 549a)–550c), 553a)–554c).
3. *Gallienus*: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 66, 172, 511–511b, 632.
4. *Claudius Gothicus*: *RIC* V.1, nos. 165–167, 222, 229.
5. *Aurelian*: *RIC* V.1, no. 258.

CABIRUS:

1. *Claudius Gothicus*: *RIC* V.1, no. 204.

CERES:

1. *Septimius Severus*: *RIC* IV.1, nos. 370–371, 475, 476, 756; possibly no. 387.
2. *Caracalla*: *RIC* IV.1, no. 355.
3. *Claudius Gothicus*: *RIC* V.1, no. 24.

DEA CAELESTIS:

1. *Septimius Severus*: *RIC* IV.1, nos. 193, 266–267B, 759–760, 763, 763A, 766, 766A.
2. *Caracalla*: *RIC* IV.1, nos. 130a)–131b), 415a)–415d), 418A, 471.

DIANA/LUNA:

1. *Caracalla*: *RIC* IV.1, nos. 256a)–256c), 274a)–274c), 284a)–284d), 540a), 540b), 550A, 554A, 558a)–558c), 565, 567a), 567b).
2. *Gordian III*: *RIC* IV.3, nos. 121, 127.
3. *Aemilian*: *RIC* IV.3, nos. 2a), 2b).
4. *Valerian*: *RIC* V.1, nos. 85, 114, 115, 212, 213.
5. *Gallienus*: *RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 74, 290, 291, 380, 418, 419 and *RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 29, 30, 174–183, 235, 444, 473, 609, 646.
6. *Claudius Gothicus*: *RIC* V.1, nos. 29, 144, 198, 205, 219, 220.
7. *Quintillus*: *RIC* V.1, nos. 16, 49.

ELAGABAL:

1. *Elagabalus*: RIC IV.2, nos. 61, 62, 64, 65, 131–135, 143, 144, 176, 194–197, 369–371.

ISIS:

1. *Caracalla*: RIC IV.1, nos. 257a), 257b), 544.
2. *Claudius Gothicus*: RIC V.1, nos. 202, 217, 218.

JANUS:

1. *Pertinax*: RIC IV.1, no. 3.
2. *Geta*: RIC IV.1, no. 79.
3. *Gallienus*: RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 45.

JUNO:

1. *Septimius Severus*: RIC IV.1, no. 316.
2. *Hostilian*: RIC IV.3, nos. 190, 202A.
3. *Trebonianus Gallus*: RIC IV.3, nos. 25, 35, 54, 69, 78, 83, 109–112.
4. *Volusian*: RIC IV.3, nos. 155, 156, 171–177, 209, 218, 252a)–253b).
5. *Valerian*: RIC V.1, no. 96.
6. *Gallienus*: RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 428 and RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 222–224.
7. *Claudius Gothicus*: RIC V.1, no. 212.

LIBER/BACCHUS:

1. *Septimius Severus*: RIC IV.1, nos. 25, 27A, 31, 32, 44, 99, 112a), 112b), 257, 661, 666, 669, 761, 762, 763B, 764A, 765.
2. *Caracalla*: RIC IV.1, nos. 74a), 74b), 76, 85, 182, 420–422.
3. *Gallienus*: RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 229, 230, 574.
4. *Claudius Gothicus*: RIC V.1, no. 64.

MERCURY:

1. *Herennius Etruscus*: RIC IV.3, nos. 151a), 151b).
2. *Hostilian*: RIC IV.3, no. 188.
3. *Valerian*: RIC V.1, no. 214.
4. *Gallienus*: (RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 75, 292 and RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 195, 242, 607, 634, 653.
5. *Claudius Gothicus*: RIC V.1, nos. 84, 207.
6. *Aurelian*: RIC V.1, no. 336.
7. *Carinus*: RIC V.2, nos. 264, 265, 279.
8. *Numerian*: RIC V.1, nos. 403, 413–416, 436, 437.

MINERVA:

1. *Septimius Severus*: RIC IV.1, nos. 4, 49, 53, 61, 68, 71, 83, 206, 318, 319, 350E, 408–410, 458, 483, 685, 689, 695.
2. *Caracalla*: RIC IV.1, nos. 21, 25a)–25c), 340, 348A, 406B, 414, 417a), 417b), 336a), 336b); possibly no. 73.
3. *Geta*: RIC IV.1, no. 154.
4. *Philippus I*: RIC IV.3, no. 1.
5. *Gallienus*: RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 322, 323 and RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 453, 617, 651.
6. *Claudius Gothicus*: RIC V.1, nos. 203, 224, 225, 236.
7. *Aurelian*: RIC V.1, no. 334.
8. *Probus*: RIC V.2, nos. 65–69, 115, 116.

NEPTUNE:

1. *Septimius Severus*: RIC IV.1, nos. 228, 234, 241, 244.
2. *Gallienus*: RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 359, 368, 369 and RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 244–246, 603.
3. *Claudius Gothicus*: RIC V.1, no. 214.
4. *Aurelian*: RIC V.1, no. 324.

OPS:

1. *Pertinax*: RIC IV.1, nos. 8a)–9, 20, 27, 27A, 35a)–36.

PLUTO:

1. *Caracalla*: RIC IV.1, nos. 241, 242, 261a)–262c), 279, 279A, 542, 555a)–555c), 560, 569.

SATURN:

1. *Valerian*: RIC V.1, nos. 67, 210.
2. *Gallienus*: RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 289 and RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 554, 606.
3. *Claudius Gothicus*: RIC V.1, no. 199.
4. *Probus*: possibly RIC V.2, no. 598.

SERAPIS:

1. *Caracalla*: RIC IV.1, nos. 193, 194, 208, 244, 263a)–263f), 280a)–280e), 290, 497, 502, 505, 561a), 561b).
2. *Gordian III*: RIC IV.3, no. 30.
3. *Gallienus*: RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 19, 600.
4. *Claudius Gothicus*: RIC V.1, nos. 201, 202.

VENUS:

1. *Septimius Severus*: RIC IV.1, nos. 328, 419.
2. *Caracalla*: RIC IV.1, nos. 310a)–312d), 574, 575A, 577a), 577b).
3. *Gordian III*: RIC IV.3, nos. 125, 126, 131.
4. *Valerian*: RIC V.1, nos. 20, 222.
5. *Gallienus*: RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 298 and RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 288, 289, 621, 660, 661.
6. *Claudius Gothicus*: RIC V.1, no. 245.
7. *Aurelian*: RIC V.1, nos. 70, 335.
8. *Carinus*: RIC V.2, nos. 230–232.
9. *Numerian*: RIC V.2, nos. 405, 406, 438.

VESTA:

1. *Septimius Severus*: RIC IV.1, no. 350F.
2. *Valerian*: RIC V.1, no. 175.
3. *Gallienus*: RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, nos. 241, 278 and RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, nos. 290, 518.

VULCAN:

1. *Valerian*: RIC V.1, nos. 1, 5.
2. *Gallienus*: RIC V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 633.
3. *Claudius Gothicus*: RIC V.1, nos. 215, 224.

APPENDIX FOUR

DIACHRONIC VARIATION IN CARACALLA'S REPRESENTATION DURING JOINT AND SOLE REIGN

Table 3 lists the number of coin types that fit into the various representational categories from each year Caracalla reigned together with his father Septimius Severus. The coin types in table 4 also belong to the period of joint rule but cannot be dated any more precisely. Table 5 presents the number of coin types as sorted into the representational categories spread over the years in which Caracalla reigned as sole ruler. Coin types minted in 211, the year in which Septimius Severus died, are included in this table as well. Because this year marks the transition from joint to sole rule, coin types minted in this year are excluded from the analysis of coin types struck in each of the two separate periods (joint rule and sole rule).² Table 6 shows coin types that were also issued during Caracalla's sole rule, but cannot be dated precisely.

Table 3

	198	199	200	201	202	203	204	205	206	207	208	209	210
Dynastic representation	1	0	2	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Military representation	0	3	3	3	6	2	4	1	7	13	15	8	7
Divine association	6	2	4	1	1	0	2	3	3	3	5	6	3
<i>Saeculum aureum</i>	15	5	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	1	2
Virtues	2	0	0	1	0	8	1	0	0	0	0	1	5
<i>Euergesia</i>	4	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Restitutor</i> messages	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Geographical messages	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	3	0	0	0
Elevation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

² The coin types that are fully undated or dated to the periods 209–212 and 210–213 are excluded from these tables.

Table 3 (*cont.*)

	198	199	200	201	202	203	204	205	206	207	208	209	210
Non-specific representation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Aeternitas</i> messages	0	0	0	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unica	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Uncertain	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
Dynastic representation and divine association	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2
Dynastic representation and military representation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Military representation and divine association	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
TOTAL	28	10	10	7	15	13	11	5	10	22	23	17	21

Table 4

	Undated (198)	Undated (199–200)	Undated (200–201)	201–206	202–204	205–207	206–210
Dynastic representation	1	3	1	6	3	0	3
Military representation	0	2	2	6	0	4	8
Divine association	0	3	1	3	0	1	6
<i>Saeculum aureum</i>	0	11	4	4	0	0	5
Virtues	0	3	1	13	0	1	9
<i>Euergesia</i>	0	0	0	0	2	1	1

Table 4 (*cont.*)

	Undated (198)	Undated (199–200)	Undated (200–201)	201–206	202–204	205–207	206–210
<i>Restitutor</i> messages	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
Geographical messages	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Elevation	0	1	0	1	0	0	1
Non-specific representation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Aeternitas</i> messages	0	5	0	6	0	0	0
Unica	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Uncertain	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dynastic representation and divine association	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dynastic representation and military representation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Military representation and divine association	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	1	29	9	40	5	7	35

Table 5

	211	212	213	214	215	216	217
Dynastic representation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Military representation	14	1	3	8	6	0	14
Divine association	1	10	15	22	74	40	41
<i>Saeculum aureum</i>	5	3	12	0	0	0	0
Virtues	2	1	0	1	0	0	0
<i>Euergesia</i>	0	1	5	0	0	0	0
<i>Restitutor</i> messages	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Geographical messages	0	0	0	4	0	0	0
Elevation	9	0	0	0	0	0	0
Non-specific representation	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
<i>Aeternitas</i> messages	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unica	0	4	1	1	10	6	7
Uncertain	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Dynastic representation and divine association	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Dynastic representation and military representation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Military representation and divine association	0	0	0	0	8	0	0
TOTAL	32	20	37	39	98	46	62

Table 6

	Undated (213)	Undated (213–214)	Undated (213–217)	Undated (214–217)	213–217
Dynastic representation	0	1	0	0	0
Military representation	3	0	6	0	4
Divine association	1	1	15	10	0
<i>Saeculum aureum</i>	1	0	0	0	0
Virtues	0	0	5	0	0
<i>Euergesia</i>	1	0	1	0	0
<i>Restitutor</i> messages	0	0	0	0	0
Geographical messages	0	0	0	0	0
Elevation	0	0	0	0	0
Non-specific representation	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Aeternitas</i> messages	0	2	1	2	0
Unica	1	0	0	0	0
Uncertain	0	0	0	0	0
Dynastic representation and divine association	0	0	0	0	0
Dynastic representation and military representation	0	0	0	0	0
Military representation and divine association	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	7	4	28	12	4

APPENDIX FIVE

DIACHRONIC VARIATION IN GALLIENUS' REPRESENTATION DURING VALERIAN'S AND GALLIENUS' JOINT REIGN

Table 7 lists the number of coin types that fit into the various representational categories from each year Gallienus reigned together with his father Valerian. The coin types in table 8 belong also to the period of joint rule but cannot be dated any more precisely.

Table 7

	253	254	255	256	257	258	259
Dynastic representation	4	0	0	0	1	1	0
Military representation	2	9	1	4	18	44	24
Divine association	4	5	3	6	11	3	8
<i>Saeculum aureum</i>	9	2	0	1	13	3	0
Virtues	3	5	0	0	13	1	4
<i>Euergesia</i>	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
<i>Paradeigmata</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
<i>Restitutor</i> messages	0	0	0	2	1	2	4
Geographical messages	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Elevation	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
Non-specific representation	0	0	0	0	3	0	3
<i>Aeternitas</i> messages	1	0	0	0	0	2	1

Table 7 (*cont.*)

	253	254	255	256	257	258	259
Unica	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Uncertain	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dynastic representation and military representation	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
<i>Saeculum aureum</i> and geographical messages	0	0	0	0	2	1	1

Table 8

	253-4	254-5	255-6	256-7	257-8	258-9
Dynastic representation	1	0	0	0	0	0
Military representation	2	10	5	12	14	23
Divine association	6	9	5	2	4	3
<i>Saeculum aureum</i>	4	5	4	10	12	0
Virtues	6	8	12	15	17	9
<i>Euergesia</i>	0	0	0	0	3	0
<i>Paradeigmata</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Restitutor</i> messages	2	0	1	2	3	0
Geographical messages	0	0	0	0	0	0
Elevation	1	0	0	0	2	0
Non-specific representation	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 8 (*cont.*)

	253-4	254-5	255-6	256-7	257-8	258-9
<i>Aeternitas</i> messages	0	1	1	1	1	1
Unica	0	0	0	0	0	0
Uncertain	1	0	0	0	0	0
Dynastic representation and military representation	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Saeculum</i> <i>aureum</i> and geographical messages	0	0	0	0	5	0

APPENDIX SIX

IMAGES

Coins are chosen as representative for specific types.

1) *Adventus* (RIC IV.3, Trajan Decius, no. 11b)). Compagnie Generale de Bourse (www.cgb.fr).



2) *Victoria* (RIC IV.2, Balbinus, no. 8). Compagnie Generale de Bourse (www.cgb.fr).



3) *Fides militum* (RIC IV.2, Maximinus Thrax, no. 43). Compagnie Generale de Bourse (www.cgb.fr).



4) Jupiter Conservator (RIC V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 76). Numismatische Bilddatenbank Eichstätt (www.nbeonline.de).



5) Hercules (RIC IV.3, Gordianus III, no. 116). Compagnie Generale de Bourse (www.cgb.fr).



- 6) Mars Victor (*RIC V.2*, Probus, no. 83). Compagnie Generale de Bourse (www.cgb.fr).



- 7) Sol (*RIC V.1*, Gallienus sole reign, no. 113). Numismatische Bilddatenbank Eichstätt (www.nbeonline.de).



- 8) Apollo Salutaris (*RIC IV.3*, Trebonianus Gallus, no. 32). Numismatische Bilddatenbank Eichstätt (www.nbeonline.de).



9) Elagabal (*RIC IV.2, Elagabalus, no. 196A*). Numismatische Bilddatenbank Eichstätt (www.nbeonline.de).



10) Emperor as *sacerdos* (*RIC IV.2, Severus Alexander, no. 50*). Compagnie Generale de Bourse (www.cgb.fr).



11) Elagabalus as *invictus sacerdos* (*RIC IV.2, Elagabalus, no. 86*) . Numismatische Bilddatenbank Eichstätt (www.nbeonline.de).



12) *Providentia* (RIC IV.2, Gordianus II, no. 1). Numismatische Bilddatenbank Eichstätt (www.nbeonline.de).



13) *Liberalitas* (RIC V.1, Claudius Gothicus, no. 57). Compagnie Generale de Bourse (www.cgb.fr).



14) *Virtus* (RIC V.2, Probus, no. 816). Compagnie Generale de Bourse (www.cgb.fr).



15) *Pietas* (RIC IV.3, Volusianus, no. 182). Compagnie Generale de Bourse (www.cgb.fr).



16) *Aequitas* (RIC IV.3, Philippus I, no 27b). Compagnie Generale de Bourse (www.cgb.fr).



17) *Temporum felicitas* (RIC V.2, Probus, no. 104). Compagnie Generale de Bourse (www.cgb.fr).



18) *Pax* (RIC IV.1, Septimius Severus, no. 37). Compagnie Generale de Bourse (www.cgb.fr).



19) *Securitas* (RIC V.1, Quintillus, no. 31). Compagnie Generale de Bourse (www.cgb.fr).



20) *Salus publica* (RIC IV.2, Macrinus, no. 83). Numismatische Bilddatenbank Eichstätt (www.nbeonline.de).



21) *Salus generis humani* (RIC IV.1, Caracalla, no. 350). Compagnie Generale de Bourse (www.cgb.fr).



22) Pluto (RIC IV.1, Caracalla, no. 261c). Wildwinds (www.wildwinds.com; courtesy of the British Museum).



23) *Genius exercitus Illuriciani* (RIC IV.3, Trajan Decius, no. 16c)). Compagnie Generale de Bourse (www.cgb.fr).



24) Decius' consecration coins

a) Augustus (*RIC IV.3*, Trajan Decius, no. 78). Numismatische Bilddatenbank Eichstätt (www.nbeonline.de).



b) Vespasian (*RIC IV.3*, Trajan Decius, no. 79). Numismatische Bilddatenbank Eichstätt (www.nbeonline.de).



c) Nerva (*RIC IV.3*, Trajan Decius, no. 84b)). Numismatische Bilddatenbank Eichstätt (www.nbeonline.de).



d) Antoninus Pius (*RIC* IV.3, Trajan Decius, no. 89). Numismatische Bilddatenbank Eichstätt (www.nbeonline.de).



e) Commodus (*RIC* IV.3, Trajan Decius, no. 93). Numismatische Bilddatenbank Eichstätt (www.nbeonline.de).



f) Septimius Severus (*RIC* IV.3, Trajan Decius, no. 96). Numismatische Bilddatenbank Eichstätt (www.nbeonline.de).



25) Legionary coin of Gallienus (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus joint reign, no. 372).
Numismatische Bilddatenbank Eichstätt (www.nbeonline.de).



26) 'Animal' coin of Gallienus (*RIC* V.1, Gallienus sole reign, no. 166).
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INDEX

- Abundantia, *abundantia* 43, 44, 187, 192, 261, 294
 Acta Arvalia 215, 218
 Actium 122, 125
 Adiabeni 42, 85
Adlocutio 70, 71, 76, 77, 280
Adventus 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 81, 92, 243, 244, 257, 280, 283, 306, 332
 Aemilian 50, 51, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 65, 66, 69, 80, 89, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 107, 109, 110, 111, 116, 119, 120, 124, 125, 132, 135, 136, 137, 142, 144, 159, 160, 161, 171, 172, 173, 175, 181, 183, 190, 192, 194, 200, 201, 202, 207, 213, 221, 283, 304, 305, 308, 314, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320
 Aemilian, Mussius 20, 269, 314
 Aequitas, *aequitas* 3, 37, 46, 156, 160, 161, 162, 182, 183, 184, 185, 221, 246, 247, 259, 294, 296, 306, 307, 337
 Aesculapius 98, 214, 216, 235, 238, 240, 241, 286, 287, 289, 291, 320
 Africa 47, 75, 246
Agon Solis 153
 Alamanni 14, 83, 269, 274, 297
 Albinus, Clodius 94, 313
 Alexander the Great 4, 177, 250
 Alexandria 15, 75, 237, 244
Alimenta 165
 Amalthea 182, 284
 Ammon 238
 Annona, *annona* 43, 44, 45, 156, 251, 300
 Antioch 15, 148
Antoninianus 16, 17, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 271
 Antoninus Pius 81, 235, 236, 263, 264, 341
 Apollo 3, 59, 60, 61, 97, 98, 102, 113, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 131, 132, 133, 153, 214, 216, 221, 235, 283, 284, 286, 287, 289, 290, 291, 304, 306, 316, 319, 334
 Arabs 42, 85
Ara Pacis 199, 200
Arvales 138, 139, 215
 Asia Minor 13, 15
Augures 138, 139
 Augustus 26, 31, 45, 69, 96, 98, 119, 122, 125, 126, 131, 133, 138, 139, 141, 157, 199, 200, 212, 250, 263, 264, 266, 294, 299, 300, 307, 340
 Aurelian 3, 4, 15, 16, 17, 51, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 65, 72, 80, 82, 83, 85, 90, 91, 92, 97, 98, 100, 103, 105, 106, 107, 109, 111, 116, 119, 120, 121, 122, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 136, 144, 146, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 159, 160, 161, 164, 166, 167, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 180, 184, 190, 192, 194, 196, 200, 201, 202, 203, 207, 209, 213, 214, 250, 258, 283, 305, 308, 314, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323
 monetary reform 17
Aurelianus 17
 Aureolus 20, 269, 314
Aureus 149, 169, 271
Aurum coronarium 84, 278, 282
 Balbinus 16, 51, 54, 65, 77, 78, 80, 89, 100, 101, 103, 107, 109, 116, 118, 124, 136, 137, 138, 144, 159, 160, 161, 166, 169, 180, 183, 190, 191, 194, 198, 202, 203, 204, 207, 213, 259, 313, 316, 332
 Ballista 20, 83, 269, 314
 Banditry 1, 17, 18, 19, 269
 Britain 14, 37, 42, 75, 83, 92, 225, 242, 243, 249, 305
 Bulla Felix 18, 19
 Caborus 98
 Caesar 122, 140, 141, 192, 200, 212, 266
 Camillus, M. Furius 266
 Campus Martius 21, 115, 199
 Caracalla 3, 4, 16, 19, 20, 21, 36, 40, 41, 50, 51, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 65, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 89, 90, 92, 100, 101, 103, 107, 109, 113, 116, 120, 124, 125, 127, 130, 132, 133, 135, 136, 139, 144, 150, 159, 160, 161, 162, 164, 166, 168, 171, 172, 173, 176, 177, 178, 184, 185, 188, 190, 191, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 200, 201, 202, 203, 207, 209, 210, 211, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 225–252, 254, 259, 263, 272, 276, 277, 296, 301, 303, 305, 308, 313, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 339
 Carausius 128
 Carinus 40, 51, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 65, 72, 73, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 91, 92, 100, 102, 103, 105, 106, 107, 109, 111, 116, 120,

- 124, 125, 129, 135, 136, 137, 144, 150, 159,
160, 161, 162, 164, 166, 171, 173, 174, 175,
180, 181, 183, 184, 190, 192, 194, 196, 197,
202, 203, 204, 207, 213, 305, 314, 317, 318,
319, 321, 323
- Carthage 95, 99, 246, 305
- Carus 20, 51, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 65,
80, 84, 86, 90, 91, 92, 100, 101, 102, 103,
105, 106, 109, 111, 116, 120, 124, 125, 130,
136, 144, 150, 159, 160, 161, 162, 164, 171,
173, 174, 175, 176, 190, 192, 194, 197, 201,
202, 203, 204, 207, 209, 210, 211, 213, 296,
314, 316, 317, 318, 319
- Cato 115, 266
- Celsus 20
- Cerberus 236, 237, 239
- Ceres 96, 98, 239, 242, 291, 320
- Cerialis 37
- Christianity 22, 23, 74, 105, 253, 254, 262,
267, 270, 296
- Circus Maximus 21, 251
- Claudius 160, 263, 266
- Claudius Gothicus 15, 17, 18, 51, 55, 56,
57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 65, 72, 80, 83, 84, 86,
90, 91, 92, 100, 103, 106, 107, 109, 111, 112,
113, 116, 119, 120, 124, 125, 127, 129, 130, 132,
135, 136, 137, 138, 144, 150, 159, 160, 161,
164, 166, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 181,
190, 192, 194, 195, 196, 200, 201, 202, 203,
204, 207, 209, 210, 211, 213, 214, 216, 218,
235, 269, 283, 284, 304, 314, 316, 317, 318,
319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 336
- Clementia, *clementia* 46, 120, 156, 157,
160, 162, 294, 296
- Clupeus virtutis* 157
- Cocles, Horatius 265
- Coin debasement 16, 17
- Cologne 14
- Commodus 1, 2, 6, 29, 66, 96, 106, 108,
110, 113, 114, 119, 126, 154, 163, 178, 216, 217,
218, 235, 239, 263, 264, 341
- Concordia, *concordia* 41, 42, 43, 44, 47,
80, 90, 92, 113, 133, 156, 180, 187, 188, 192,
241, 243, 245, 246, 247, 248, 261, 263, 280,
282, 293, 299
- Congiarium* 90, 165, 166, 167, 168
- Constantine 98, 158
- Constitutio Antoniniana* 4, 21, 217, 227,
239, 240, 245, 254, 305
- Cyprian 23
- Dacia 47, 102, 258, 259, 266, 267, 307
- Dacians 68, 83, 84, 259
- Dea Caelestis 98, 246, 305, 320
- Dea Dia 139
- Decius, Trajan 4, 20, 21, 22, 50, 51, 55, 56,
57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 65, 66, 67, 68, 72, 80,
83, 85, 89, 90, 92, 93, 99, 100, 102, 103,
109, 116, 124, 133, 136, 137, 138, 144, 159,
160, 161, 162, 166, 167, 168, 171, 172, 173,
180, 183, 190, 191, 192, 194, 196, 201, 202,
206, 207, 208, 213, 253–267, 272, 303,
304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 314, 318, 332, 339,
340–341
- sacritical edict 4, 22, 253, 254, 262,
267
- divi series* 4, 255, 263–266, 267, 307,
339
- Diadumenian 40, 51, 65, 66, 77, 78, 79,
99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 109, 116, 118, 124, 136,
139, 144, 158, 159, 160, 161, 166, 169, 183,
189, 190, 191, 193, 194, 195, 196, 200, 202,
207, 213, 313
- Diana/Luna 98, 125, 199, 216, 235, 285,
286, 287, 290, 291, 320
- Didius Julianus 51, 65, 77, 78, 79, 90, 94,
99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 109, 116, 118, 124,
136, 144, 158, 159, 160, 161, 166, 169, 183,
190, 191, 194, 200, 202, 206, 207, 209, 210,
213, 313
- Diocletian 1, 2, 14, 17, 23, 104, 108, 112, 114,
117, 118, 122, 125
- monetary reform 17
- Di patrii/di auspices* 43, 105, 112, 113, 233,
234
- Domitian 104, 105, 235, 265
- Domus divina* 232
- Donativa* 30, 165, 168
- Dura 278
- Dynastic instability 19, 20
- Egnatii 178, 295
- Egypt 15, 237, 239, 240, 243, 287
- Elagabal 3, 43, 97, 98, 101, 102, 122, 123,
126, 127, 130, 137, 139, 146–149, 150, 151,
152, 321, 335
- Elagabalus 3, 4, 16, 19, 27, 51, 54, 55, 56,
57, 58, 59, 60, 65, 72, 80, 81, 82, 86, 90,
97, 100, 101, 102, 103, 106, 107, 109, 116, 120,
124, 123, 125, 126, 127, 130, 131, 135, 136,
137, 139, 144, 146–149, 150, 152, 154, 155,
159, 160, 161, 162, 164, 166, 169, 171, 181,
185, 190, 191, 194, 195, 196, 201, 202, 205,
207, 209, 210, 211, 213, 216, 218, 259, 313,
316, 317, 318, 321, 335
- Epidemics 1, 17, 18, 132, 269
- Epulones* 138, 139
- Etruria 178, 295

- Falerii 178, 295
 Fecunditas, *fecunditas* 41, 299
 Felicitas, *felicitas* 3, 42, 43, 44, 47, 48, 91, 127, 128, 168, 187, 188, 192, 193–199, 203, 211, 221, 245, 246, 261, 285, 292, 298, 302, 304, 305, 307, 337
 Fetiales 138, 139
 Fides, *fides* 42, 43, 44, 48, 80, 85, 89, 90, 92, 93, 97, 121, 131, 178, 187, 192, 198, 243, 244, 245, 246, 257, 280, 282, 286, 289, 294, 333
 Flamen *dialis* 139
 Fortuna, *fortuna* 43, 97, 127, 187, 188, 192, 245, 249, 293, 294, 301
 Forum Romanum 226, 251, 269
 Financial problems 16–17, 187, 227, 269
 Florian 51, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 65, 66, 73, 80, 87, 90, 92, 100, 101, 103, 106, 107, 109, 116, 119, 120, 124, 125, 127, 130, 131, 136, 142, 144, 150, 159, 160, 161, 162, 164, 165, 171, 173, 174, 175, 190, 192, 194, 195, 196, 200, 202, 203, 205, 206, 207, 209, 211, 213, 215, 216, 296, 314, 316, 318, 319
 Forum of Augustus 117
 Franks 14, 83, 269, 274, 297
 Frumentatio 165
 Gaius (jurist) 24
 Galba 96, 183, 192, 193, 216, 218
 Gallic empire 14, 15, 16, 39, 40, 113, 114, 269, 281, 307, 315
 Gallienus 3, 4, 6, 14, 15, 20, 23, 36, 43, 51, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 65, 72, 73, 76, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 100, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 109, 111, 114, 116, 119, 120, 121, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 132, 133, 135, 136, 142, 144, 145, 150, 159, 160, 161, 162, 164, 165, 166, 168, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 180, 181, 182, 185, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 207, 209, 210, 211, 213, 215, 216, 218, 219, 235, 250, 260, 269–302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 314, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 329–331, 334, 342
 legionary series 43, 93–94, 274, 278–280, 282, 284, 285, 289, 296, 341
 animal series 4, 287–290, 300, 341
 ‘peace of Gallienus’ 23, 270
 monetary innovations 270–271, 296–297
 military reforms 269–270
 Gallus, Trebonianus 18, 20, 22, 51, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 65, 66, 72, 80, 81, 89, 100, 101, 102, 103, 109, 116, 119, 120, 123, 124, 125, 132, 135, 136, 144, 159, 160, 161, 162, 164, 166, 171, 172, 173, 179, 181, 183, 190, 192, 194, 197, 200, 201, 202, 203, 207, 209, 213, 260, 304, 314, 318, 319, 321, 334
 Gaul 14, 15, 42, 45, 75, 95, 297
 Germans 13, 14, 15, 42, 67, 82, 83, 84, 85, 113, 114, 132, 242, 251, 256, 257, 274, 277, 278, 280, 281, 297, 306, 307
 Germany 14, 37, 206
 Geta 19, 21, 40, 50, 51, 54, 65, 72, 80, 82, 83, 90, 100, 102, 103, 109, 113, 116, 124, 125, 127, 133, 135, 136, 139, 144, 150, 159, 160, 161, 164, 166, 168, 169, 171, 185, 190, 191, 194, 198, 200, 202, 207, 209, 213, 217, 225, 226, 227, 229, 235, 240, 241, 243, 245, 247, 248, 249, 250, 259, 305, 313, 317, 318, 319, 321, 322
 damnatio memoriae 226
 Gordian I 51, 54, 65, 66, 77, 80, 89, 100, 101, 102, 103, 109, 112, 116, 118, 124, 136, 144, 159, 160, 161, 164, 166, 171, 172, 173, 177, 179, 181, 183, 190, 191, 194, 200, 202, 206, 207, 208, 209, 213, 313
 Gordian II 51, 54, 65, 77, 80, 89, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 109, 112, 116, 118, 124, 136, 144, 159, 160, 161, 163, 164, 166, 171, 172, 173, 183, 190, 191, 194, 200, 202, 206, 207, 208, 209, 213, 313, 336
 Gordian III 40, 51, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 65, 76, 80, 81, 82, 83, 86, 90, 92, 100, 103, 106, 107, 109, 110, 111, 112, 116, 118, 119, 120, 124, 125, 127, 128, 129, 132, 135, 136, 144, 150, 159, 160, 161, 164, 166, 170, 171, 172, 173, 175, 177, 180, 183, 190, 191, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 207, 209, 210, 211, 213, 221, 235, 259, 295, 304, 313, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 322, 323, 333
 Goths 13, 15, 42, 67, 82, 83, 84, 89, 90, 253, 257, 269, 306
 Great persecution 23
 Hades 237, 239
 Hadrian 32, 75, 105, 114, 126, 145, 165, 167, 199, 212, 235, 236, 260, 261, 263
 Hadrianeum 199
 Heliogabalium 149
 Helios 122, 238
 Hercules 3, 48, 50, 56, 57, 61, 86, 95, 96, 97, 98, 105, 108–115, 117, 118, 119, 121, 130,

- 133, 152, 154, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178,
221, 233, 234, 235, 238, 240, 284, 286,
287, 288, 295, 304, 306, 307, 308, 316,
317, 333
Herculius 108, 114
Herennia Etruscilla 263
Herennius Etruscus 40, 51, 54, 65, 66, 83,
89, 99, 100, 101, 103, 109, 116, 119, 120, 124,
125, 133, 136, 137, 144, 159, 160, 161, 169,
179, 180, 181, 183, 189, 190, 192, 194, 200,
202, 207, 208, 213, 304, 314, 318, 319, 321
Heruli 83, 281
Hilaritas, *hilaritas* 48, 188
Hostilian 18, 22, 40, 51, 54, 65, 77, 80, 89,
90, 100, 101, 102, 103, 109, 116, 120, 124, 125,
133, 136, 137, 144, 159, 160, 161, 162, 164,
169, 179, 180, 181, 183, 190, 192, 194, 202,
206, 207, 208, 209, 213, 215, 221, 260, 304,
314, 318, 319, 321
Illyrian legions 43, 68, 93, 102, 177, 256,
257, 258, 267, 305, 339
Image competition 114
Indulgentia, *indulgentia* 46, 156, 160, 162,
236, 246, 247, 294, 296, 297
Inflation 17
Ingenuus 20, 269, 314
Iovius 104, 108, 114
Isauria 19
Isis 98, 216, 235, 239, 243, 244, 305, 321
Ius civile 182
Ius gentium 182
Ius Italicum 246, 305
Iustitia, *iustitia* 46, 156, 157, 160, 162, 182,
246, 247
Janus 98, 286, 287, 291, 321
Julia Domna 236, 241, 247, 248
Juno 98, 102, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290,
291, 321
Jupiter 3, 50, 52, 55, 56, 61, 78, 82, 91, 96,
97, 98, 101, 102–107, 108, 110, 113, 115, 117,
118, 119, 121, 126, 127, 130, 131, 139, 146, 149,
150, 154, 173, 178, 182, 216, 221, 235, 238,
240, 241, 250, 283, 284, 286, 287, 288,
289, 290, 291, 304, 305, 306, 308, 316,
333
Justinian 24
Laetitia, *laetitia* 43, 44, 187, 188, 192, 245,
275, 292, 302
Largitiones 167–168
Leones 250
Lepcis Magna 105, 113, 233, 234
Liber/Bacchus 98, 105, 112, 113, 233, 234,
235, 240, 286, 287, 288, 291, 321
Liberalitas, *liberalitas* 3, 46, 90, 155, 156,
160, 161, 162, 165–169, 170, 183, 184, 197,
199, 221, 246, 247, 259, 260, 294, 296, 302,
304, 305, 306, 336
Libertas, *libertas* 43, 44, 89, 90, 187, 188,
192, 219, 245, 246, 293, 294, 302, 305
Louis XIV 122, 129
Lucullus, L. Licinius 193
Ludi saeculares 112, 233, 234, 241, 251, 300
Lugdunum 277
Lustratio agri 115
Lustratio exercitus 115
Lydius 19
Macer, Clodius 279
Macrian Iunior 20, 269, 314
Macrian Senior 20, 269, 314
Macrinus 19, 51, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60,
65, 72, 76, 80, 81, 82, 83, 90, 100, 102, 103,
107, 109, 116, 118, 124, 135, 136, 139, 144,
159, 160, 161, 166, 168, 169, 170, 189, 190,
191, 193, 194, 195, 196, 198, 200, 202, 206,
207, 208, 209, 211, 213, 214, 215, 216, 218,
226, 313, 316, 338
Marcomanni 269
Marcus Aurelius 14, 143, 198, 235, 263
Mariniana 295
Marius 15, 315
Mark Antony 279
Mars 3, 57, 58, 61, 63, 78, 82, 96, 97, 98,
102, 110, 112, 115–121, 130, 174, 175, 199,
200, 221, 233, 235, 240, 241, 242, 261, 284,
285, 286, 287, 289, 290, 291, 295, 301, 304,
305, 306, 316, 317, 334
Maximian 108, 112, 114, 118
Maximinus Thrax 20, 27, 51, 54, 55, 56,
57, 58, 59, 60, 65, 66, 67, 68, 80, 81, 83,
85, 86, 89, 90, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 109,
116, 118, 119, 124, 135, 136, 139, 144, 159,
160, 161, 162, 164, 166, 169, 170, 183, 190,
191, 194, 200, 201, 202, 204, 207, 213, 246,
259, 296, 313, 317, 333
Medusa 47, 164
Melquart 105, 112, 233
Memor 20, 269
Mercury 98, 164, 165, 180, 284, 286, 287,
288, 289, 290, 291, 321
Messius 24
Milan 142
Minerva 96, 98, 111, 173, 175, 233, 235, 240,
241, 285, 286, 287, 291, 322
Minos 237, 239

- Minotaur 236, 237, 239
 Modestinus 24
 Moesia 75, 253
 Moneta, *moneta* 43, 44, 45, 156, 183, 184, 251, 300
 Munificentia, *munificentia* 44, 46, 156, 160, 162
 Mus, P. Decius 266
Mutatio vestis 72

 Neoplatonism 290
 Neptune 98, 238, 284, 286, 287, 290, 291, 322
 Nero 31, 192, 209, 212
 Nerva 263, 264, 265, 266, 340
 Nicomedia 142, 215
 Numerian 40, 51, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 65, 72, 73, 80, 81, 82, 86, 90, 92, 99, 100, 101, 103, 106, 109, 111, 116, 120, 124, 125, 129, 130, 135, 136, 137, 144, 150, 159, 160, 161, 162, 164, 171, 173, 175, 179, 180, 181, 190, 191, 192, 194, 195, 200, 202, 203, 206, 207, 209, 213, 304, 305, 314, 317, 318, 319, 321, 323

 Octavian 122, 125
 Odaenathus 15, 16, 83, 204, 281, 297, 298, 315
 Ops 98, 322
Oriens 44, 47, 125, 127, 128, 129, 130, 188, 192, 285, 286, 292, 300, 302, 305
 Osiris 237, 238, 240
 Otacilia Severa 180
 Otho 96

 Palatine Hill 73, 133, 149
 Palfuerius 19
 Palmyrene Empire 14–16, 39, 151, 315
 Palmyrene war 16, 151
 Pannonia 47, 102, 253, 256, 257, 258, 259, 267
 Papinian 24
 Parthians 13, 42, 82, 83, 84, 85, 117, 215, 242
 Patientia, *patientia* 46, 156, 160, 162
 Paul (jurist) 24
 Pax, *pax* 3, 37, 41, 42, 43, 44, 47, 48, 66, 80, 91, 127, 187, 188, 192, 199–205, 206, 208, 221, 245, 248, 261, 275, 292, 298, 302, 305, 307, 338
 pax deorum 22, 181, 285
 pax Romana 87, 200, 203
 Pegasus 48, 287, 288, 298
 Perennis 29
 Persians 13, 14, 15, 83, 84, 89, 128, 129, 204, 269, 276, 278, 281, 283, 287, 297, 298

 Pertinax 1, 2, 51, 65, 66, 68, 77, 79, 80, 88, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 109, 116, 118, 124, 135, 136, 144, 145, 159, 160, 161, 166, 169, 170, 183, 188, 190, 191, 194, 200, 202, 206, 207, 213, 259, 263, 304, 308, 313, 321, 322
 Pescennius Niger 85, 94, 313
 Philippus Arabs/Philippus I 20, 21, 22, 51, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 65, 72, 80, 81, 83, 90, 100, 102, 103, 109, 116, 124, 125, 135, 136, 143, 144, 159, 160, 161, 166, 168, 171, 172, 173, 177, 179, 180, 183, 184, 185, 190, 191, 194, 195, 196, 198, 202, 203, 204, 207, 209, 210, 213, 250, 253, 257, 259, 304, 306, 313, 317, 322, 337
 Philippus II 22, 40, 51, 54, 65, 66, 80, 89, 100, 102, 103, 109, 116, 120, 124, 125, 130, 135, 136, 144, 150, 159, 160, 161, 166, 168, 171, 172, 173, 174, 179, 180, 183, 190, 191, 194, 195, 196, 198, 201, 202, 203, 206, 207, 213, 250, 260, 313, 317, 318
 Pietas, *pietas* 3, 46, 48, 137, 156, 157, 158, 160, 161, 162, 178–182, 183, 221, 259, 286, 291, 294, 296, 306, 337
 Piso, L. Calpurnius 20, 269, 314
 Piso, G. Calpurnius 209
 Plague 18, 132, 269
 Plautilla 41, 188, 247, 248
 Pluto 98, 235–240, 244, 245, 305, 322, 339
Pontifex maximus 134, 137, 138, 140, 141, 142, 143, 145, 181, 304
Pontifices 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 153, 181
Pontifices dei Solis 153
 Postumus 14, 15, 99, 113, 114, 128, 152, 218, 219, 281, 294, 307, 315
 Probus 19, 36, 51, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 65, 72, 76, 80, 81, 82, 83, 85, 86, 87, 90, 91, 92, 100, 103, 105, 106, 107, 109, 111, 112, 113, 114, 116, 118, 119, 120, 124, 125, 126, 127, 129, 130, 131, 136, 144, 150, 159, 160, 161, 162, 164, 165, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 181, 184, 190, 191, 192, 194, 195, 196, 197, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 207, 209, 210, 211, 213, 215, 216, 218, 219, 250, 296, 305, 307, 314, 316, 317, 318, 319, 322, 334, 337
Profectio 43, 70, 71, 72, 74, 75, 76, 243, 244
 Proserpina 239
 Providentia, *providentia* 3, 43, 46, 96, 131, 156, 160, 161, 162–165, 166, 178, 183, 221, 241, 242, 246, 286, 294, 296, 304, 306, 336
 Ptolemy I Soter 237

- Pudicitia, *pudicitia* 46, 156, 160, 162, 259, 260–261, 267, 294, 296
 Pupienus 16, 51, 54, 65, 77, 80, 89, 100, 101, 103, 107, 109, 116, 118, 124, 136, 137, 138, 144, 159, 160, 161, 166, 168, 169, 180, 183, 190, 191, 194, 198, 202, 204, 207, 213, 259, 313, 316
 Pythagoreanism 290
 Quadi 13, 269
 Quietus 15, 20, 269, 314
Quindecimviri sacris faciundis 138, 139
 Quintillus 51, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 65, 80, 83, 84, 86, 90, 92, 100, 101, 103, 106, 107, 109, 116, 119, 120, 124, 125, 130, 132, 133, 136, 138, 139, 141, 142, 144, 145, 150, 159, 160, 161, 164, 166, 171, 172, 173, 175, 181, 190, 192, 194, 195, 196, 200, 201, 202, 206, 207, 208, 209, 213, 258, 283, 314, 316, 318, 319, 320, 338
 Regalian 20, 269, 314
 Remus 48, 93, 115, 119, 199, 298
 Rhea Silvia 115, 119, 121, 285, 291
 Roma (*dea*) 37, 47, 48, 79, 173, 175, 199, 233, 249, 251
 Rome (*urbs*) 2, 21, 22, 32, 46, 47, 67, 70, 71, 73, 74, 75, 102, 115, 133, 139, 141, 142, 143, 145, 147, 148, 151, 152, 153, 156, 179, 199, 222, 225, 226, 239, 249, 257, 301, 305, 306
 thousandth anniversary 21, 22, 102, 143, 179
 'Romferne' 142
 Romulus 47, 48, 93, 115, 119, 175, 199, 295, 298
 Roxolani 269
 Sabinia Tranquillina 180, 198, 210
Sacerdos amplissimus dei invicti Solis Elagabali 139
Sacerdotes sive sodales aedis Iovis propugnatoris 139
 Sacralization (of imperial power) 74, 143, 145, 154, 174
 Salonina 260, 287, 290, 296, 299
 Salonus 14, 40, 51, 54, 65, 66, 77, 78, 79, 99, 100, 101, 103, 104, 109, 116, 124, 125, 136, 138, 144, 158, 159, 160, 161, 169, 171, 183, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 200, 202, 207, 213, 293, 314
 Salus, *salus* 3, 42, 43, 44, 47, 91, 132, 187, 188, 192, 203, 210, 211–220, 221, 245, 246, 286, 292, 293, 294, 297, 300, 302, 304, 305, 307, 338, 339
 Samnites 212
 Sarmatians/Sarmatai 13, 83, 84, 269
 Sassanid dynasty 13
 Saturn 98, 199, 284, 287, 298, 322
 Securitas, *securitas* 3, 37, 43, 44, 47, 187, 188, 192, 198, 203, 205–211, 221, 245, 246, 248, 275, 292, 293, 298, 302, 307, 338
 Serapis 98, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 286, 287, 291, 305, 322
 Serdica 151, 152, 153
 Severan dynasty 19, 20, 23, 24, 74, 118, 171, 195, 218
 Severus Alexander 13, 19, 20, 40, 51, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 65, 66, 67, 74, 75, 76, 80, 81, 82, 83, 89, 90, 100, 101, 103, 106, 107, 109, 116, 119, 120, 121, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 134, 135, 136, 139, 144, 149, 150, 155, 159, 160, 161, 162, 164, 166, 171, 172, 173, 175, 177, 178, 181, 183, 190, 191, 194, 195, 196, 198, 200, 201, 202, 203, 205, 207, 209, 210, 211, 213, 216, 259, 263, 296, 313, 316, 317, 318, 335
 Severus, Septimius 4, 16, 18, 19, 23, 36, 41, 43, 50, 51, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 63, 64, 65, 72, 73, 74, 75, 80, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 90, 92, 93, 94, 98, 100, 103, 105, 106, 107, 109, 112, 116, 119, 120, 121, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 130, 132, 133, 135, 136, 144, 150, 159, 160, 161, 162, 164, 166, 168, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 180, 181, 184, 185, 190, 191, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 200, 201, 202, 203, 205, 207, 209, 210, 213, 214, 215, 216, 218, 225, 226, 228, 229, 230, 232, 233, 234, 235, 240, 241, 244, 246, 247, 248, 249, 251, 252, 260, 263, 264, 279, 296, 313, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 338, 341
 legionary series 43, 93–94, 279
 triumphal arch 226
 Shapur I 14, 269
 Sibylline books 139
 Silvanus 14
 Sirmium 142
 Siscia 47, 107, 300
 Sixtus II 23
 Smyrna 173, 253
Sodales Antoniniani 139
Sodales Augustales 139
Sodales Titii 138
 Sol 3, 58, 59, 61, 82, 86, 97, 98, 117, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 131, 132, 146,

- 150–154, 173, 176, 205, 214, 221, 233, 235,
238, 240, 250, 282, 284, 285, 286, 287,
288, 290, 291, 298, 304, 305, 306, 308, 316,
318, 334
Spain 14, 75, 95, 193
Spes, *spes* 43, 44, 47, 187, 188, 192, 218,
245, 246, 293
Sulla 122, 200
- Tacitus (emperor) 51, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59,
60, 61, 65, 80, 83, 85, 87, 90, 91, 92, 100,
101, 103, 105, 106, 109, 116, 119, 120, 124,
125, 131, 136, 144, 150, 159, 160, 161, 162,
164, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 177, 190, 191,
192, 194, 195, 196, 197, 200, 201, 202, 203,
204, 206, 207, 209, 210, 211, 213, 215, 216,
314, 316, 318, 319
Temple of the Sun 151, 152, 153
Tetrarchy 2, 98, 104, 108, 110, 112, 114, 117,
118, 119, 122, 125, 142, 154
Tetricus 15, 315
Tiberius 192, 212, 266
Titus 193, 263, 265, 266
Trajan 45, 68, 84, 105, 108, 112, 126, 140,
143, 158, 193, 216, 217, 218, 259, 261, 263,
265, 299, 300, 307
 restitution series 265–266, 307
Tresviri monetales 31, 32
Trier 142
- Uberitas, *uberitas* 43, 44, 187, 192, 261,
294
Ulpian 24
Uranus Antoninus 126, 314
Usurpation 2, 15, 20, 29, 33, 40, 89, 92,
114, 118, 126, 128, 269, 279, 281, 307, 313,
315
- Vaballathus 15, 16, 48, 315
Valens (usurper under Gallienus) 20,
269, 314
Valerian 4, 14, 15, 20, 22, 23, 51, 55, 56, 57,
58, 59, 60, 61, 65, 76, 80, 81, 82, 83, 85,
86, 90, 91, 92, 100, 103, 105, 106, 107, 109,
116, 119, 122, 124, 125, 127, 128, 129, 130,
132, 135, 136, 144, 150, 159, 160, 161, 164,
166, 168, 171, 172, 173, 175, 180, 181, 182,
190, 191, 192, 194, 195, 196, 198, 199, 200,
201, 202, 204, 207, 209, 210, 211, 213, 215,
216, 221, 269, 270, 272, 274, 275, 276, 277,
280, 282, 283, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296,
297, 298, 299, 300, 302, 304, 305, 306,
307, 308, 314, 316, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322,
323, 329
Valerian Junior 40, 196, 293, 299
Vandals 13, 83
Velabrum, the 193
Venus 98, 164, 165, 235, 241, 285, 286, 287,
291, 323
Ver sacrum 117
Verus, Lucius 84, 263
Vespasian 31, 119, 126, 193, 236, 263, 264,
266, 340
Vesta 47, 96, 98, 153, 180, 235, 248, 285,
286, 287, 291, 323
Victor, Egnatius 295
Victoria, *victoria* 36, 37, 41, 42, 47, 48, 73,
75, 77–87, 91, 93, 97, 105, 106, 133, 147,
173, 175, 176, 177, 204, 205, 235, 242, 244,
248, 249, 257, 274, 277, 278, 280, 281, 282,
286, 287, 292, 298, 301, 302, 306, 332
Victorinus 15, 315
Virtus, *virtus* 3, 46, 52, 68, 80, 86, 91, 111,
112, 120, 155, 156, 157, 158, 160, 161, 162,
169–178, 183, 184, 199, 205, 221, 222, 233,
246, 247, 259, 260, 272, 275, 284, 285,
286, 294, 295, 296, 302, 304, 306, 336
Vitellius 96
Volusian 22, 40, 51, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60,
61, 65, 66, 72, 80, 89, 90, 100, 102, 103,
109, 116, 120, 124, 125, 132, 135, 136, 144,
159, 160, 161, 162, 164, 166, 171, 172, 173,
179, 181, 183, 190, 192, 194, 195, 197, 201,
202, 203, 207, 209, 213, 260, 314, 318, 319,
321, 337
Vulcan 48, 98, 175, 287, 291, 323
Zenobia 15, 269, 315

